

Victory for homeless boys 'would throw law into disarray'

BY RAY CLANCY

THE High Court was told yesterday that if it were to allow two homeless five-year-old boys to demand council accommodation in their own right the floodgates will be opened to thousands of claims by undeserving families.

The result would be absurd and unreal, said Timothy Straker, for Oldham council, Greater Manchester, which, with the London Borough of Bexley, is contesting claims that they act unlawfully by rejecting the applications from the boys last year when they were both aged four.

Lawyers for Moses Bentum, whose parents were declared intentionally home-

less after their house in Thamesmead was repossessed when they fell behind with mortgage payments, and Graham Garlick, whose mother, a single parent aged 20, was deemed to be intentionally homeless by Oldham council when she was evicted for running up rent arrears of £150, are arguing that the boys are individuals who are entitled under the 1985 Housing Act to be housed by the local authority as there is no age limit in the legislation. Both families are living in temporary accommodation while their cases are considered.

Mr Straker told the court that if the test cases succeeded

the housing laws would be thrown into disarray.

An extreme example, he said, a council tenant could deliberately get rid of some perfectly satisfactory accommodation after taking a dislike to it and obtain a new home, simply because his child went along to the local authority and said: "Another one, please".

He said it was "manifestly absurd to suppose that a four-year-old can make an application". The application did not stand up in law because it was brought in reality by the child's parents rather than the infant concerned. It was a "transparent device to get round the housing act".

Brenda Morris, for Bexley council, referring to letters between Moses Bentum and the local authority, said it was quite clear that they were signed by the boy's father.

George Warr, counsel for Graham Garlick, accused the local authorities of shutting the door on the desperate plight of young children who were homeless and vulnerable. Councils had wide duties and powers, under the 1985 Housing Act and the 1989 Children Act, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and family life, he said.

The Spitalfields Trust, set up ten years ago to save the Georgian buildings in the area, say the designs by Sir Norman Foster, and Allies and Morrison, for one portion of the redevelopment should not be given consent till more detailed plans for the whole site have been presented. The designs are for the first two buildings on the Bishopsgate frontage of the 12-acre former market site.

Dan Cruickshank, a trustee, said: "The whole scheme should be approved in detail before the valuable part of the site on the City edge is built. The rest of the development might be abandoned."

The trust has made its concerns known to the environment secretary, who must approve the scheme before planning consent is granted. The Spitalfields Development Group hopes that approval of the Corporation of London and Tower Hamlets council will persuade Chris Patten to accept the scheme.

The development would contain 1.1 million sq ft of offices in 14 buildings and about a hundred shops. A separate complex will house shops, cafes, and restaurants in the refurbished Horner Buildings, once the home of the vegetable market. There will also be 165 flats for sale and four acres of open space.

Film leads to review of school

BY MATTHEW D'ANCONA
EDUCATION REPORTER

SCHOOL inspectors are to review conditions at Summerhill school in Suffolk, after the making of a documentary film about the school which shows pupils beheading a rabbit with a machete and taking part in massage classes.

The education department said yesterday that Summerhill, a progressive independent school where the 63 pupils can do what they like, was given a clean bill of health by the inspectorate of schools in May 1990. The inspectorate would "consider the new matters arising from the film." The film will be screened on Channel 4 on Monday.

Zoe Redhead, the head teacher and daughter of A.S. Neill, the school's founder, said that life at Summerhill was not usually disorderly or violent. The school allowed pupils' emotions to come to the surface and developed them. The rabbit killed in the film, she added, had been suffering from myxomatosis and was spayed a lingering death.

Harriet Gordon and Peter Grizel, the film's producers, yesterday defended the school, where fees are £5,000 a year. "We were impressed by the complex level of decision-making," Ms Gordon said.

Albert Lamb, whose son Roll, aged 13, is a Summerhill pupil, said the warmth and affection at the school was missing from the film.

Spitalfields objection is raised

BY RACHEL KELLY
PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

CONSERVATIONISTS are objecting to the latest plans to redevelop Spitalfields in east London after they were approved in principle this week by local councils.

The Spitalfields Trust, set up ten years ago to save the Georgian buildings in the area, say the designs by Sir Norman Foster, and Allies and Morrison, for one portion of the redevelopment should not be given consent till more detailed plans for the whole site have been presented. The designs are for the first two buildings on the Bishopsgate frontage of the 12-acre former market site.

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Aiming high: the actor Tom Conti rehearses Walton's Henry V with the London Symphony Orchestra for a Barbican Hall concert tomorrow

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Brewer puts 500 pubs up for sale

BY PETER VICTOR

AROUND 500 pubs in the South-East were put up for sale by Whitbread Breweries yesterday to comply with government guidelines after a Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation.

In spite of the difficulties faced by publicans who now have to pay higher rents on new leases or buy the freeholds, about 600 people were expected at Whitbread's One Stop Pub Shop in a hotel in central London.

The pubs, ranging from £50,000 to just over £1 million, were part of 2,400 tied houses which Whitbread must dispose of before November. Chris Ford, Whitbread's regional estates manager for the South-West, said he was confident the firm could beat the deadline.

Although many of the properties were being sold because previous tenants had been forced out by the changes, Mr Ford said that annual turnover in pub tenancies has run at around 20 per cent anyway. "Some move to buy elsewhere and some have chosen to leave the industry."

Buyers included former pub tenants and leaseholders with a strong presence of redundant workers and retiring members of the police and armed forces.

Fred Osmond, aged 45, and his wife Dee were looking for a pub to buy yesterday. Mr Osmond, a warrant officer in the Royal Corps of Transport for the past 24 years, retires this summer. He plans to put his £35,000 gratuity down towards the freehold of a pub in the South-East.

Mrs Osmond, an interior designer and dress maker, was undaunted by the prospect of starting up in business in a contracting industry. "Even if God forbid the business didn't take off, we'd have a roof over our heads," she said. "It's something we've wanted to do for a long time."

Judge wins fight over young drinkers

A judge yesterday won a courtroom battle to oust the landlord of the pub he called "Mothercare" because of under-age drinkers.

Reconder Charles Barton QC said youngsters, some as young as 15, filled The Mall pub near his £350,000 three-storey Victorian town house in Clifton, Bristol. They came out at closing time chanting, vomiting and smashing glasses.

Pub bosses yesterday announced radical changes to keep the peace in the residential area and save the licence.

Mr Barton, aged 43, said he waded through pools of vomit and urine to reach his front door just yards away. In desperation, Mr Barton said he had hired undercover agent Michael Osborne to spy on the crowds.

A recorder on the Crown Court Western circuit, Mr Barton had earlier objected to a licence renewal at Bristol Magistrates' Court on grounds including obscenity and under-aged drinking.

IRA rockets bunker found

A significant quantity of IRA arms has been found in a waterlogged bunker near Askeaton in Co Limerick. At least seven home-made rockets complete with spare parts and ammunition as well as a number of guns were uncovered, police said.

The find came after police found a rocket launcher in a car and held two men for questioning. It is the latest in a series of arms dumps found in the region during a continuing police anti-terrorist operation. The IRA built the bunkers in the mid-1980s to store arms from Libya.

Casino gun raid nets £200,000

Two armed robbers are believed to have stolen almost £200,000 in a raid on a casino in Leicester Square, central London, yesterday.

The men, both white, knocked at the back door of the Napoleon casino at 1 pm and a chief who answered was handcuffed, had a hood put over his head and was led downstairs, police said. Staff were then ordered out of the cash room and the money stolen. No shots were fired and no one was injured. The casino was closed at the time. Police said that the robbery looked like a professional job.

£18,500 for VC

A Victoria Cross won by Company Sergeant Major Frederick Barter of The Royal Welsh Fusiliers during the first world war was bought by his regimental museum for £18,500 at Spink's in London yesterday. CSM Barter won the VC at Festubert on May 16, 1915, when he led a party of eight men to clear 500 yards of German trenches, capturing three officers and 102 men.

Rapist jailed

A prisoner on the run who raped a woman three times near Vauxhall Bridge, central London, in November 1990, was jailed for eight years by the Central Criminal Court. Paul Sherlock, aged 27, who had been serving six years for rape, had absconded two months earlier while on leave for a funeral. His victim had agreed to meet him after he charmed her at Victoria station.

CORRECTIONS

Caroline Steel is a spokeswoman for the Royal Society for Nature Conservation and not English Nature as reported yesterday.

TV shows cultivate couch potato

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

WATCHING television can seriously slow your metabolism and cause young girls to burn calories more slowly than when lying in bed, according to an American psychologist.

Television may induce "a kind of deep relaxation experience" that turns down metabolism — but it could depend on the kind of programme, Robert Klesges, of Memphis State University in Tennessee, believes.

Professor Klesges was investigating the well-established link between obesity and watching television. Statistically, the more you watch the fatter you are likely to be, but the reason is unknown.

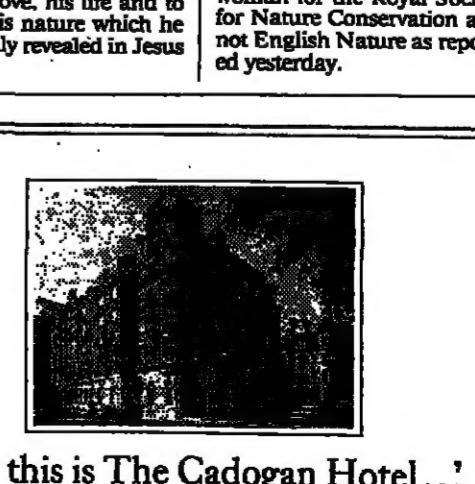
People have speculated that TV addicts get fat because they sit in front of the screen eating popcorn or sweets or because they do less exercise. The fact they also watch a lot of food advertisements could also have a bearing. Nobody had looked at the influence of the programmes.

Professor Klesges and Mary Lee Shelton, a research student, selected 32 girls aged 7-11 and measured their metabolic rate when resting on a bed. A plastic hood was put loosely over the head of each girl and the oxygen breathed in and the carbon dioxide breathed out measured. Once the baseline rates for each girl had been

measured, the television was turned on, showing a sit-com called *The Wonder Years*.

To their surprise, the girls' metabolic rate fell below the resting rate. The metabolic rate of overweight girls fell 16.5 per cent and normal-weight girls 12.5 per cent.

Professor Klesges suspects the effect applies to boys, too, and he wants to look for it in adults. If it is common to all these groups, it could explain why couch potatoes tend to be fat. As their metabolism slows, the calories they take in as food can be converted into fat. He would also like to see if more action-oriented programmes had different effects.



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Judge
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'Lady' Aberdour jailed after two-year spree that saw £2.4 million lavished on cars, servants and parties

Book-keeper spent charity's funds on a life of luxury

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

ROSEMARY Aberdour may not be the biggest embezzler the British courts have seen, but she will certainly go down as one of the most stylish. She was sentenced to four years in prison by the Central Criminal Court yesterday after spending £2.4 million on a life of unabashed luxury, which included a Bentley, country house parties, helicopter jaunts and a two-week Caribbean cruise on a 137ft yacht.

Aberdour became a familiar figure in the offices of expensive professional party organisers. She spent £40,000 on a Caribbean theme for her home and £65,000 for a party in London Docklands. Her marble-floored flat was decorated with silk and satin, fitted with an indoor swimming pool and an £11,000 baby grand piano, and stocked with champagne.

She told friends that the money came from a £20 million family inheritance, and passed among them as the newly entitled Lady Aberdour. She told her family that the flat came with her job of raising funds for charity by entertaining wealthy potential donors. The luxury did indeed come from her £21,000 job as book-keeper, secretary and deputy director of a development foundation attached to the national hospital for neurology and neurosurgery in Bloomsbury. She stole it.

Aberdour joined the small foundation office on a salary of £9,000 in 1986, as one of three staff working to raise £10 million towards a new wing for the hospital. In 1988, she took over running an annual charity ball called the Queen Square Ball, and the foundation came to recognise her as a highly successful money raiser. In the years she was in control of the ball, its fund-raising rose from a few thousand pounds a year to about £40,000. Overall, her efforts helped to bring in about £2 million to the foundation.

But they were laced with self-interest. The bank accounts linked to the ball were used for collecting funds she sole from the foundation. She apparently began with several small sums in 1988, which paid for a holiday and then a car. Her first target was the crossed donation cheques



Young: his signature was forged on papers

spending, and the ball accounts fluctuated constantly. Barclays only once questioned the situation. When she was withdrawing money for the Bentley.

Meanwhile her life as "Lady" Aberdour was blossoming and she hinted that she was related to the Earl of Morton. According to a friend, she said in 1981 that she would come into a tide and money when she was about 25. When she adopted her title, friends and staff

were told not to mention it to her family. She suggested that there had been a row and that her parents might have been passed over.

To mark the birthday of a friend and employee, she arranged an elaborate party for two at Conway castle, which included a helicopter flight and cost £40,000. She took over a Yorkshire country house for two weeks and hired a fleet of vintage cars to take guests to the races. When she took another party to stay at a Sussex country house, she sent her labrador home by chauffeur-driven car when she found that dogs were barred.

The foundation was not forgotten. She said that she would be making a personal donation of £500,000 over five years and laid out the first £100,000. She took on extra staff who became part of a retinue at her new flat. A chauffeur and an aide were also kept in the expensive block of flats.

In the first six months of 1991, she stole more than £1 million. In June last year, Richard Stevens, the foundation director, was looking for some papers when he came across photocopies of a building society draft for £121,000 with the signatures of Mr Young and Professor du Boulay. He thought that the signatures looked wrong and checked.

When they were found to be forged, Aberdour was challenged and said that she had cash flow problems and had borrowed the money. She was dismissed and a solicitor went with her to collect papers from the office in her flat. The initial legal advice to the foundation was not to go to the police, because it might make recovering the £121,000 difficult. Once the foundation realised the possible extent of the fraud, Aberdour had fled.

The building societies have since paid back the £1.7 million, plus £60,000 in interest, and the foundation is negotiating with Barclays. There are writs against companies who received money from Aberdour for parties, cars and jewellery, including a dispute over money paid to Bentleys Entertainers.

Aberdour owes more than £300,000 and has made herself bankrupt. She refused to explain her actions to detectives. At her parties, she never got drunk and always retired early, complaining that no one loved her. One suggestion is that all she wanted was to be liked.

Mr Stone and Will Hopper, a merchant banker, said that they resigned together as trustees in late 1989 because of their concern over the "unbusiness-like" way they thought the foundation was being run. They left the board after Mr Hopper had been detained in a proposal for Mr Young to be appointed president and for Mr Stone to take his place as chairman. "Had I

been in charge, Aberdour would have been out on her ear within minutes," Mr Stone said. "Basically she was a secretary, and not a very good one, but she was given the fancy title of deputy director. I knew her to be incompetent as an administrator though I never suspected impropriety."

He has written to the commission seeking an investigation because of the jeopardy to the foundation's fund-raising ability and the harm publicity could have on other appeals. The commission said a decision on whether to investigate would be taken when it was known how much the trustee had been able to recover.

□ The chauffeur, Dean Burnham, aged 25, left penniless after living in an expensive flat supposedly at Aberdour's expense, has joined the Navy.

Trustees resigned over 'lax' controls

A FORMER trustee has asked the Charity Commission to investigate the £2.7 million fraud.

Jonathan Stone, a corporate solicitor, said he had resigned from the foundation in protest at "lax" financial controls in 1989, a year after Aberdour is known to have been stealing over a third of the foundation's funds. John Young, chairman of the trustees, rejected Mr Stone's claims.

Mr Stone and Will Hopper, a merchant banker, said that they resigned together as trustees in late 1989 because of their concern over the "unbusiness-like" way they thought the foundation was being run. They left the board after Mr Hopper had been detained in a proposal for Mr Young to be appointed president and for Mr Stone to take his place as chairman. "Had I

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Director stole £341,000

By ADAM FRESCO

A COMPANY director at Sun Life Assurance who stole £341,000 from clients to finance his luxurious life style was jailed for four years yesterday.

David Hatfield, aged 42, a father of three from Lymington, Hampshire, used his financial expertise on gullible victims he met at business seminars, talking them into handing large sums of money, which never reached Sun Life.

Hatfield persuaded one client, a retired naval commander, Donald McClean, to give him nearly £200,000 before he died aged 91 last year. Hatfield promised to reinvest the money with Sun Life Assurance but instead paid it into one of his own accounts.

Hatfield, who had earned £67,000 a year, admitted three charges of theft and three of obtaining property by deception.

THE SUNDAY TIMES A laugh a day...

Fooling around to rediscover the child within you is the latest health trend, and has some surprising supporters. "Laughter may merely create a placebo effect," says Dr Weeks, "but it can make a measurable difference in many conditions, both psychological and physical. In my work I have found that those

who have found that those

with a great sense of humour who don't take themselves too seriously are far better off. I would see humour as a major contributory factor to health. It's a pity you can't get it on the NHS."

The antidote to stress - in The Sunday Times Magazine tomorrow

Election 92

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The Sunday Times tomorrow

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AIR MALTA

when she returned that contractors were too busy to fix the council-owned garage and continually dismissed her pleas. She continued to pay the weekly £1.79 rent for 22 months, totalling £157.52. When she stopped paying, the council said that she was in breach of the tenancy agreement and changed the locks leaving the car imprisoned.

Finally last month Gordon Beever, a local councillor, broke through the red tape and Mrs O'Neill, from Radley, West Yorkshire, was

told by officials

to see her beloved car.

Mrs O'Neill, who has had asthma attacks due to stress brought on by the incident, said: "It has just been a nightmare. It is time Kirklees council was disbanded. I've played everything by the book and I've got the paperwork to prove it. I thought I'd never see the little car again."

The council has

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and agreed to pay back the

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E. S. P. R.

Officers help convict PC who stamped on man's face

BY ADAM FRESCO

TWO young police constables, sickened by a fellow officer's brutality, helped to convict him of assault causing actual bodily harm.

Both saw Police Constable Alec Mason, aged 28, repeatedly stamp on the head of a motorist as he lay handcuffed in a police van.

Police Constable Kevin Lucking, aged 28, and Woman Police Constable Georgina Christoforou, aged 21, told a jury at the Central Criminal Court of their shock and horror at the violence. PC Lucking, who was then a special constable, said he had

been ordered to tell lies about the incident afterwards by a sergeant and to say that arresting officers had been bitten by the motorist to cover up what really happened.

The court was told that Harold Benn, aged 27, an amateur sparring and boxer, was stopped in his Volvo in Tooting, south London, in January 1990. After being given a breath test which proved negative he was arrested on suspicion of stealing the car. Mr Benn protested his innocence and put up a struggle. Reinforcements were sent for and he was surrounded by 15 officers and bundled into the back of a police van.

Mr Benn told the court that his face and head were stamped on at least five times by the most senior officer, PC Mason, during the one minute journey to Tooting police station, where all the officers were based.

Mr Benn suffered terrible injuries which "horrified and sickened," WPC Christoforou, who was in the front of the van.

She said that she saw PC Mason stamping on Mr Benn's face while another officer, Police Constable Gavin Larier, had his foot pressed on the man's throat. After talking about it to PC Lucking, they both decided to report the matter to their divisional officer.

PC Lucking, accused of perverting the course of justice because of his false notes, was acquitted.

Mason, a policeman for ten years and known as "King of the Bear", was convicted of assaulting Mr Benn and acting to defeat justice by falsifying notes of the arrest. He was released on bail because his wife is expecting their second child at any time, and will be sentenced next Wednesday.

PC Larier, aged 26, was cleared of assault but convicted of perverting the course of justice in relation to notes and was jailed for four months.

Another constable, Toby Fletcher, aged 30, a former marine, admitted perverting the course of justice and was given a three months jail sentence suspended for a year.

Judge Verney, the Recorder of London, said that when he dealt with Mason next week it would be for a much more serious offence. He said that other senior ranking officers were involved in the cover up but were not prosecuted.

Leaflets to guide the bashful

BY DAMIAN WESTWORTH

IGNORANCE about sex, and the embarrassment of parents when their children ask questions, should be tackled by the Family Planning Association.

Three pamphlets were launched yesterday by Anna Ford, the television journalist and association president. She said that surveys showed 96 per cent of parents thought schools should be the main providers of sex education. Many parents admitted to shyness and embarrassment, but most young people believed their families should be responsible.

Answering your Child's Questions: Information for Parents; How your Body Changes; Information for Boys and Girls; and, Sexuality Information for Young Adults (PPA, 27-35 Mortimer Street, London WIN 7RJ; £1.50 each or £3 for set).



Ford: hopes children and parents will gain

Mother's milk has its limits

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

BREAST feeding may be best, but not if it lasts more than a year, a study published today suggests.

David Barker of Southampton University, has discovered that boys born in Hertfordshire between 1911 and 1930 and who were still being breast-fed at the age of one were more likely to suffer from heart disease in later life. Babies who were bottle-fed did even worse, and the lowest rates of heart disease were found in those who were breast-fed to begin with but weaned on to solid food by the age of one.

The results, published in the *British Medical Journal*, are the most recent findings of Professor Barker's study of old birth records, which have already disclosed links between birth weight and weight at the age of one and diabetes and heart disease.

The Hertfordshire records, meticulously kept by a health authority years ahead of its time, have opened a new field of epidemiological research. Professor Barker has traced 5,471 men who are either

alive or whose cause of death is known and has compared their dietary history with causes of death.

He suggests that, although breast milk is ideal nourishment for young infants, it is not adequate for those over six months old. "Those fed on breast milk for a year didn't grow well," he says. "Breast milk doesn't have adequate amounts of iron and vitamins, so what we are seeing may be the long-term effect of malnutrition. Alternatively, it is possible that the maternal hormones in breast milk may have an effect if babies go on getting them for too long."

Among men still living, those who had been fed breast milk for a year or more had significantly higher levels of cholesterol than those weaned earlier. Bottle-fed babies had higher levels still, but Professor Barker cautions that bottle feeds 70 years ago were not fortified with the iron and vitamins in today's feeds.

That makes it difficult, he says, to assess the relevance of the findings for bottle-fed babies today.

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QUEEN ELIZABETH 2
CUNARD IS A TRAVELER'S CHOICE

Imitation is the sincerest charity

BY ALAN HAMILTON

AFTER Red Nose day came Trading Places day, in which the population was encouraged into unnatural acts to raise £15 million for a new breast cancer centre at the Royal Marsden hospital in London. Instead of wearing plastic noses, people were encouraged to change places with others for the day; in many instances the exchange was somewhat one-sided.

John Major, surrounded by the inevitable media posse, was lent a camera and encouraged to take photographs of the press. A television cameraman gave the prime minister his apparatus and Mr Major panned around the crowd, asking if they would mind smiling. Sadly, the cameraman did not engage in debate on the ethics of children awaiting operations being used in party political broadcasts.

Elsewhere, children took over the running of classes while teachers sat at the back. Richard Branson served drinks on one of his aircraft, bank staff impersonated Dame Edna Everage, the weather forecaster Michael Fish or the singer Cher, and the chief inspector at Holloway police station washed cars.



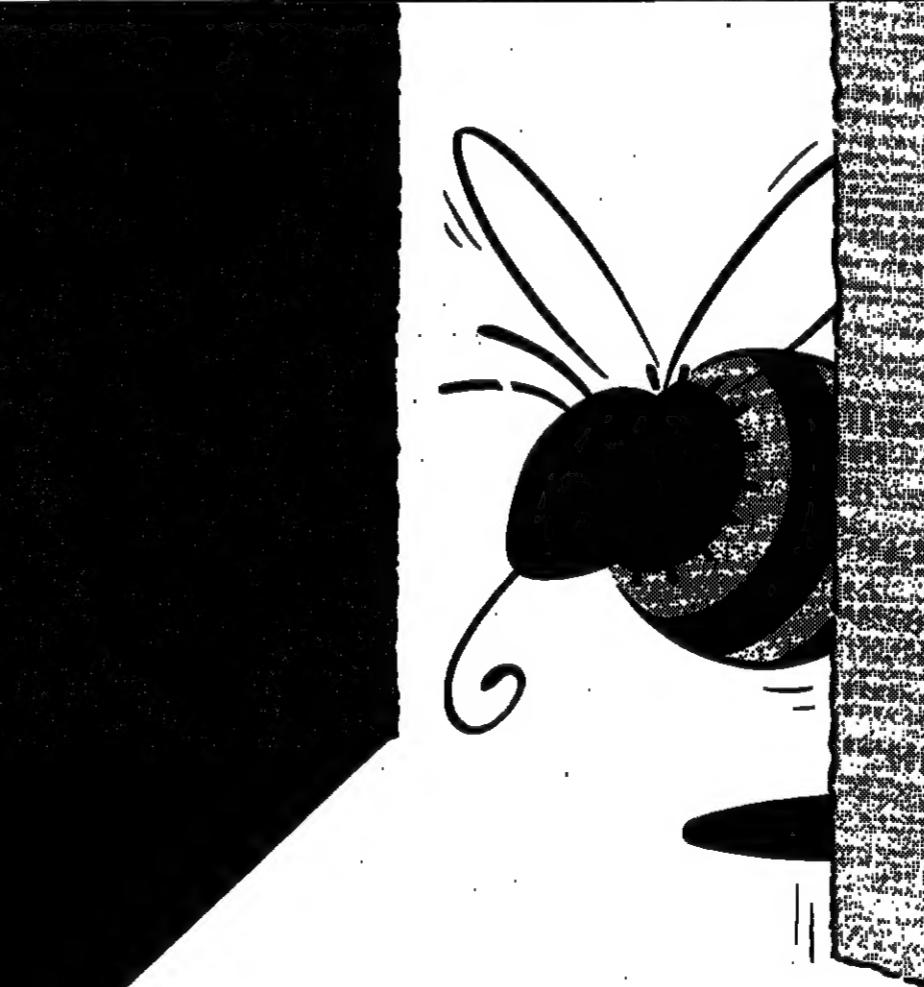
Fish faces: Bank of Scotland staff in the City of London impersonating the weather forecaster Michael Fish for Trading Places day

The campaign was launched earlier this month when Helen Egan, a bank clerk, presented *Wogan*, and the chief inspector at NatWest branch. There were suggestions of a notable improvement in the show's quality. The money is being sought to establish the first research centre of its kind in the world to seek cures for breast cancer, which kills 300 women in Britain every week.

A woman in Thetford, Norfolk, became the Queen, handing out pardons and drawing up honours lists. There were no reports of our usual Queen working in a factory.

THE OFFER: Extra interest of 1% per annum gross will be paid for 31 days on the amount by which the balance in your Instant Reserve account at the close of business on 31 March 1992 exceeds the balance on 1 March 1992 (for this purpose, neither interest paid on the account during March 1992 nor transfers from any other N&P account qualify). This amount must remain in the account until 30 April 1992. Accounts opened during March will be regarded as having a nil balance on 1 March 1992. The account must remain open on the next interest payment date (1 March 1993) when the extra interest will be paid. ***THE ACCOUNT:** The advertised rate of 9.65% gross is variable and currently payable on balances over £50,000. Gross - rate payable without taking account of deduction of income tax at the current basic rate. Net - rate payable after allowing for deduction of income tax at the current basic rate. Instant Reserve daily withdrawals are subject to branch limits and 10 days' clearance against cheques. Interest is credited annually on 1 March and will be payable net of the basic rate of income tax or, subject to the required certification, gross. Full written details of the account and the extra interest offer are available on request from National & Provincial Building Society, Provincial House, Bradford BD1 1NL.

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Traders offer lethal gas cookers as bargain buys

By DAVID YOUNG

THE recession is driving more consumers into the hands of unscrupulous traders who put lives at risk by selling potentially lethal counterfeit and second-hand goods, the annual Consumers' Congress was told yesterday. Ed Chicken, North Yorkshire's trading standards officer, said that some traders were taking advantage of people with limited incomes.

Trading standards officers recently bought and tested 39 second-hand gas cookers. They all failed the safety standards and were potentially lethal, he said. They were

being sold at "no means" jumble sale prices.

"Some traders masquerade as private sellers attempting to avoid any legal liability. Others look honest, seem knowledgeable, charge modest prices but still have scant regard to the consequences of selling defective goods," he said.

"Second-hand upholstered furniture carries the potential fire risks of the now banned dangerous foam. Sofas, beds and chairs are still being sold without any or inadequate warning labels."

The congress is to discuss ways of testing and disposing of dangerous goods to make sure that they do not find a way back on to the market and will consider what new laws are needed to enable council trading standards officers to deal with traders who put consumers at risk.

Mr Chicken said: "Well-known brands of DIY tools and motor parts are now being counterfeited. While it may seem all right to buy imitation or pirated perfume, watches, videos and tapes, using a saw blade that sheers off or a car brake pad that fails could result in serious injury or death."

Trading standards officers have also found that many children are put at risk because some toys on sale are still covered in toxic paints.

The congress will discuss this weekend how legislation has driven more people to live on the streets. Hilary Moore, secretary of the Law Centres Federation, said that people sleeping rough were in a catch 22 situation: they could not get housing benefit until they found somewhere to live, but could not find somewhere to live until they had enough money to pay a deposit and rent in advance.

The government has expected private landlords to play an expanded role in meeting people's needs for housing but government policy has not adjusted to reality that landlords expect large sums of money up front in deposits and rent in advance.

The fundamental barrier was the lack of housing that people could afford, she said. "Why is it that we spend well over £10 million of public money on mortgage interest relief and other housing benefits, but the poorest in our society still have to go without?"

Shopping, L&T section, page 16

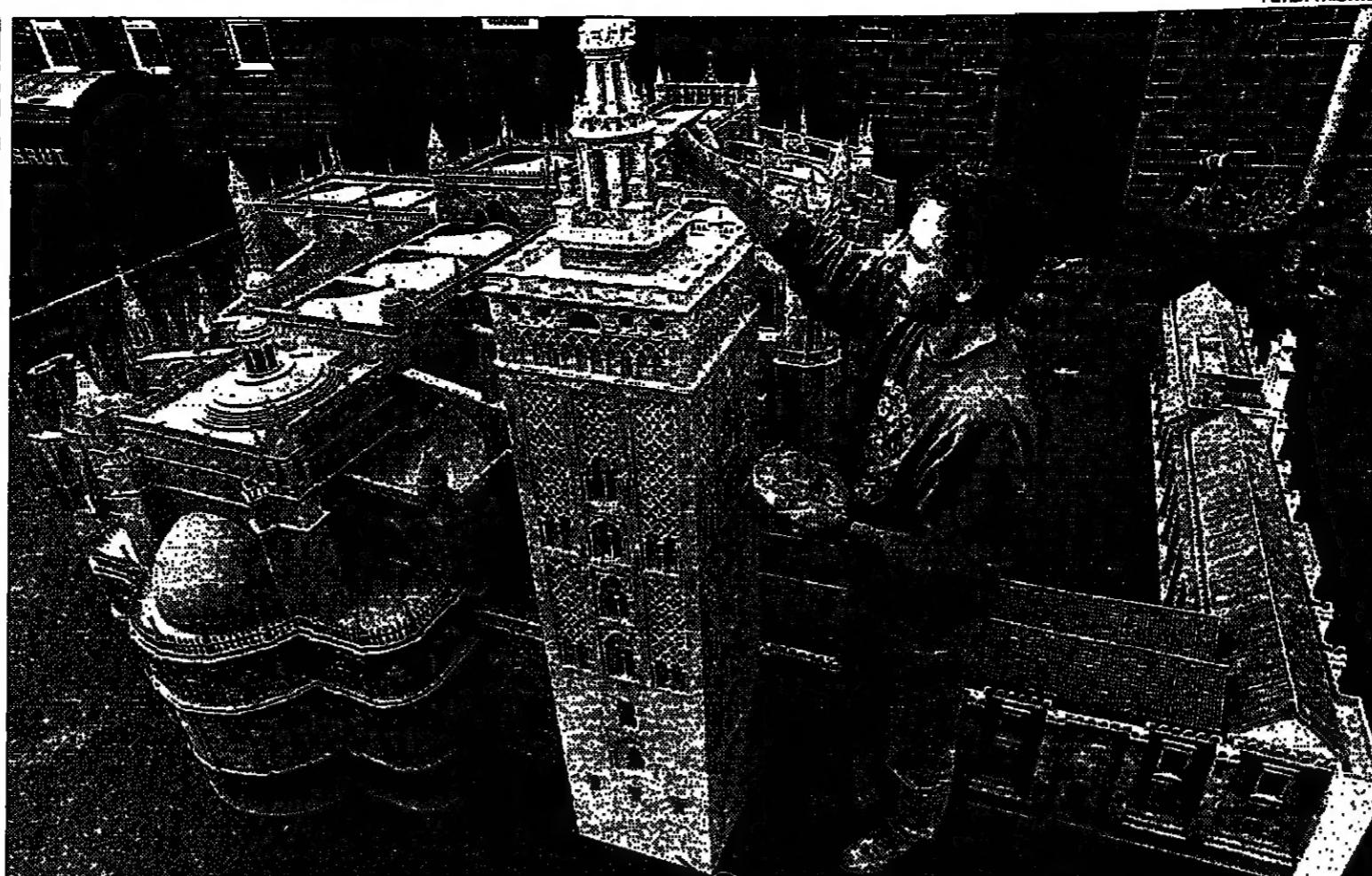
RETAILERS lost an estimated £1.4 billion through theft and other stock losses from shops and warehouses last year, according to the findings of a survey yesterday.

Booksellers, newsagents and do-it-yourself stores suffered most, though they spent above-average sums to try to cut losses from theft, clerical errors, damaged stock, mark downs and till shortages.

The scale of the losses caused by what is known in the retail trade as "shrinkage" is disclosed after Marks & Spencer announced that it is to spend £21 million on security measures in stores and warehouses. The group loses £60 million a year, more than half of it stolen, through unaccounted loss.

The survey for Touche Ross management consultants found that shrinkage cost supermarkets £349 million; electrical stores £100 million; DIY retailers £117 million, department stores £139 million; fashion shops £182 million and booksellers and stationers £41 million. The overall losses in 1991 were 9 per cent higher than the estimated figures for 1990 and are predicted to rise 5 per cent this year. The average shrinkage level reported for last year was almost a quarter of net profit.

The survey covered 8,500 retail outlets, representing 80 per cent of Britain's retail market and with a combined turnover of almost £95 billion.



Topping out: Robert Gauld-Galliers puts the finishing touches to a model of Seville cathedral before it is sent to Spain for Expo '92. The cathedral, made by Albatross Models of southwest London, will be the centrepiece of a model park featuring Spanish buildings

Retailers' stock loss tops £1bn

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

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Local authority spending Councils defy budget curb

By DOUGLAS BROOM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CORRESPONDENT

LOCAL government has emerged from 13 years of Tory rule largely unscathed, spending more and employing only slightly fewer people than when Labour was in office, according to research.

A study by Tony Travers, of the London School of Economics, published in the *Local Government Chronicle*, found that Whitehall curbs could not stop council

spending rising 18 per cent in real terms since 1979.

At 1990 prices local authority current account spending had gone up from £36.4 billion in 1979 to £49 billion while capital spending had remained close to £10 billion a year throughout the Eighties. If allowance was made for the cost of extra demands imposed on councils in the past 13 years, the growth in spending was still 15 per cent in real terms or 1.15 per cent a year above inflation.

Mr Travers said: "It would be wrong to say that pressure on councils started with Mrs Thatcher. Denis Healey, and

pushed up the proportion of their income raised through rates from 20 to 28 per cent. The introduction of the poll tax and last year's switch of funding to value-added tax had left councils raising only 15 per cent of their own income in England.

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Before the mid-Seventies

oil price rises, local government spending had been

understanding last week, embarrassing and irritating his

government. The Home Office

confirmed that a Chinese

national of that name had

applied for permission to re-

main in this country.

A statement issued yester-

day on Mr Feng's behalf said

the diplomat and his wife

were seeking asylum because

they feared persecution if

they returned to China when

his tour of duty ended next

year. The statement was sent

to the *Times* from the

London offices of the Workers

Autonomous Federation of

China, part of the free

trades union movement

which grew from the

Tiananmen Square protests.

The statement denied

claims by fellow diplomats

that Mr Feng wanted to stay

in Britain because of an affair.

In an earlier statement,

the embassy said: "His de-

parture has nothing to do

with politics. Therefore politi-

cal asylum is out of the ques-

tion. Mrs Feng has requested

several times that [the

PETER TREVOR

Lightning bolt brings havoc to house

All the plugs in an East Sussex house were blown from the wall, every light bulb exploded and a ceiling and a wall collapsed when a flash of lightning caused a break build-up of electricity.

The lightning struck the main cable supplying electricity to the house in Forest Row and caused a huge power surge. Windows were blown out and an underground water pipe burst, spraying water around the garden.

Thousands of pounds worth of damage was caused but nobody was in the house when the lightning struck on Thursday.

Gun cartridges found in jail

A number of prisoners were removed from Pentonville jail this month after prison authorities found three unused shotgun cartridges hidden in a drainpipe in an area being used by contractors.

The cartridges were found after the authorities, acting on a tip-off that an escape involving firearms might be being planned, searched the north London prison on March 12. The Home Office said that the cartridges were found in an area to which prisoners did not have access.

Memories sold

A poster showing the liner *Aquitania* with the Royal Scot railway engine alongside the quay was the top lot in a £41,500 sale of old travel posters at Onslow's auction room in Bayswater, west London. The 1924 poster, by P Irwin Brown, was bought by the National Railway Museum at York for £3,300.

Struck off

An Edinburgh solicitor serving a ten-year prison sentence for a £4 million fraud was struck off by the Scottish Solicitors' Discipline Tribunal. John McCabe was jailed in November after admitting 34 charges of fraud and one of attempted fraud.

Threat charge

A former Pakistan cricketer, Parvez Meir, appeared before Norwich magistrates yesterday accused of threatening to kill his former girl friend and causing her grievous bodily harm. Mr Meir, of Norwich, was remanded to appear again on April 3.

Pier flights off

The annual Birdman Rally on Bognor Regis pier has been ended. A local builder has withdrawn his sponsorship and nobody will bring forward the event, which costs £12,000 to stage and has attracted many people trying to fly from the pier without aid of power.

The Times Saturday March 28 1992

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W
Birmingham
apologises
for health
care errors



**Of course, at this
end of the housing market,
business is booming.**

There are an estimated half a million homeless people in this country. And it's getting worse.

But it's not only the homeless who are in trouble as a result of this Government's housing policy. Last year, over 180,000

families were in serious difficulty with their mortgages. In the past two years, 120,000 homes have been repossessed.

People who were encouraged to buy have found they can't afford the mortgage repayments. And because of the slump in

the property market, they can't afford to sell.

Nor can they afford to rent, because the Government has put a stop to the building of affordable rented housing.

It's a housing policy this country can't afford.

You can choose a better future. Make sure you do. **NALGO**



Minister makes

NHS dispute

Cunningham
apologises
for health
case errors

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR apologised yesterday for errors in the case histories it has used to support its health campaign and said it had taken firm action to prevent further mistakes.

On Thursday, Labour issued ten case histories which it had heard from people telephoning the party's headquarters after its election broadcast on health. Details of two of the cases turned out to contain inaccuracies and four families asked for the accounts to be withdrawn because they had become overwhelmed by journalists.

Jack Cunningham told yesterday's morning press conference that some errors had occurred, "which were deeply regrettable", and would not happen again.

"We insist that all cases are thoroughly checked before people are identified. We were assured that this had been done in all cases. Firm action has now been taken. There will be no recurrence."

Labour sources said that procedures had been tightened to ensure that all details of every case were checked before being given to the press. In addition, researchers would have to ensure that families were aware that once the cases were publicised they would be subjected to calls from journalists.

Labour sources would not confirm that some families had not given permission for their names and addresses to be used. They denied that anybody had been dismissed. "Nobody has been sacked. No action has been taken against any individual at this time," an official said. The mistakes had been the result of publishing the details too speedily, he added.

Neil Kinnock said: "The incident will not recur and I think that is the best thing that can be said both in terms of the people concerned and in terms of the continuity of our campaign." Asked if anyone had been dismissed, Mr Kinnock said: "There will be no recurrence."

Earlier, Mr Kinnock said his party would keep on high-

lighting the experience of patients suffering because of the underfunding and commercialisation of the national health service.

He outlined his party's plans to improve the cancer services, to which Labour would commit £50 million. He produced figures showing that five-year survival rates in France for a range of cancers were better than in Britain.

"On April 9, those who use and will use the health service can ensure that it continues as a comprehensive, unified and national service, free at the time of need by getting rid of the Tory government."

Hospital doctors and GPs sat on the platform yesterday to lend support to claims by Robin Cook, Labour's health spokesman, that the health service changes had been damaging.

Mr Cook said that a survey of nurses this week had shown that they preferred Labour's health policies by a factor of two to one; another survey found that most GPs believed the government was intent on privatising the NHS.

At the British Medical Association's conference on Thursday, doctors reaffirmed their opposition to the reforms. Sir Christopher Booth, former president of the BMA, said doctors were worried about the progressive Americanisation of British medicine.

■ Doctors' ethics: Doctors are bound not to give details about a patient without his or her consent (Jeremy Lawrence writes). But there is no guidance governing situations where patients allow their names to be given to reporters and their cases to be discussed in the media.

The General Medical Council, the doctors' disciplinary body, said that doctors "should not discuss a case until they have obtained consent themselves from the patient". It was not sufficient to rely on an assurance from a journalist or from a political party.

Peter Riddell, page 16

Jennifer Bennett: her case started the dispute

Minister makes early exit

The dispute over Labour's NHS election broadcast dogged William Waldegrave during a tour of hospitals in the West Midlands yesterday.

Mr Waldegrave cancelled his planned appearance at a public meeting in Kenilworth, Warwickshire. He denied this was because of his unwillingness to face possible awkward questions about the health service.

Mr Waldegrave told journalists that he had to return to London earlier than planned and, when pressed, said he had to run the health department as well as campaign. "I have some red boxes waiting for me."

He was pursued by reporters throughout the day as he attempted to talk about the good news of health service achievements rather than Labour's "negative campaign". His aides tried but failed to restrict a press conference in Coventry to local journalists. They had

The health secretary cannot shake off the dispute over Labour's television broadcast. Craig Seton writes

feared it would be dominated by questions from national media reporters about the dispute.

Mr Waldegrave dealt with repeated questions about his role in the controversy over who leaked the name of Jennifer Bennett, the girl whose illness inspired a Labour election broadcast. He declined an invitation to resign from Robin Cook, Labour's health spokesman, after his admission the previous day that Conservative Central Office had put the consultant at the centre of the case in touch with the *Daily Express*. Mr Waldegrave said: "He has either misunderstood what happened or he has got bit hysterical."

After a tour of the Manor hospital in Walsall, which

has trust status, the health secretary said at a press conference that, while someone at central office knew in advance that Labour had been "sniffing around a particular case", it had not connected it to the girl in the broadcast until the day afterwards, when *The Independent* had used her name.

Mr Waldegrave said he had no warning of the broadcast's contents. He first saw it on the night it was transmitted while waiting to do an interview at Channel 4. He was certain that Alan Ardin, the consultant, had not broken his hypocritical oath by disclosing the girl's name.

Later, Mr Waldegrave, when asked whether he regretted comparing the broadcast with German Nazi propaganda, said: "I do not regret at all expressing my sense of disgust at the broadcast. We have had thousands and thousands of letters and calls supporting that view."

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II 1

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No government has started behind in the polls and won Major can take little solace from history

BY MARY ANN STECHART

JOHN Major took the biggest gamble of his political career on March 11. No government has started an election campaign behind in the polls and won. But opposition parties have come up from behind and leapfrogged the governing party. Could Mr Major emulate the unexpected victories of Edward Heath in 1970 and Harold Wilson in February 1974?

When Mr Wilson called an election in May 1970, Labour was well ahead in the polls and seemed to be widening the gap with the Tories. As the campaign wore on, one journalist after another wrote off the Conservatives. Nora Beloff, in the *Observer*, wrote: 'Both party leaders are now recognising that only a bolt from the blue... can save Harold Wilson from becoming the first prime minister to win three general elections in a row.'

Peter Jenkins in *The Guardian* asked: 'What will become of the Tories after a third successive poll defeat? Why is the Labour party winning with such apparent ease?' *The Times* too got it wrong: 'It is too late [for the Conservatives] to recover lost ground,' David Wood wrote.

He was not alone. Marplan found that 67 per cent of the public thought Labour would win, with only 14 per cent rating the Tories' chances. At one point, the odds on a Labour victory reached 20-1 and for a while bookmakers refused to take any more bets. Just before the election was called with Labour ahead in the polls, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, the former prime minister, said: 'In the Conservative party we always do our best with our backs against the wall. And it's a damned great wall we're up against now.'

Mr Heath was accused of running a lacklustre campaign. But at least, in what was later to be termed the 'unpopularity contest' because voters were so fed up with both parties, he alone believed he was going to win.



Wilson and Heath: both were unexpected victors — but both were in opposition



Conservatives but the party won five more seats.

So should Mr Major take solace from these tales of victorious underdogs? Not really.

Mr Major's only hope is that like Clement Attlee's Labour government in 1950, he can squeeze back into power having started the campaign neck-and-neck with the Opposition. The bad news for Mr Major is that Mr Attlee lost his five-seat majority within 20 months and Labour did not see power again for 13 years.



Stepping out: two young women at Chelsea town hall, west London, during the 1970 general election, casting their votes for the first time

Lib Dems attack 'unfair' TV news

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Liberal Democrats have taken legal advice on what they described yesterday as the television stations' failure to give them fair news coverage. Des Wilson, the party's campaign co-ordinator, said that its electoral chances were being damaged by lack of air time.

He said that one reason why the Liberal Democrats normally did better at election time was that people were reminded that they existed. 'At the moment the opposite is happening. [The broadcasting companies] have abandoned their responsibility to fair coverage.'

Mr Wilson said that he had had informal talks with the BBC, ITN and Channel 4 about what he said was their failure to keep to an agreement that the party should have 28.5 per cent of political coverage. The party had taken legal advice, but he feared that any action would be too late.

He said that the proportion of news coverage given to the Liberal Democrats from March 16 to 20 was 23 per cent on the BBC, 18.5 per cent on ITV and 14 per cent on Channel 4. From Monday to Wednesday this week, it was 18.5 per cent on the BBC, 23 per cent on ITV and

18 per cent on Channel 4. He excluded the past two days, which had been dominated by the Jennifer Bennett case.

Mr Wilson argued that the Liberal Democrats, unlike the other main parties, did not have a tabloid newspaper with wide readership which gave extensive coverage to their party, so they were more reliant on broadcasters. 'Television has enormous power to affect this election and, inasmuch as they are reducing coverage of our party, they are having a direct effect on the election.'

Glyn Mathias, controller of public affairs for ITN, which makes ITV and Channel 4 news programmes, said that ITN had remained committed throughout the campaign to its policy of impartiality and fairness. 'Mr Wilson is attempting to measure fairness against a time formula based on party political broadcast,' he said. 'We do not accept this formula as a basis for news coverage of the campaign.'

Next week the Liberal Democrats are expected to tackle the wasted vote issue. They will say that, as the party is the main contender in more than 200 seats, it has a good chance of winning a high number of them.

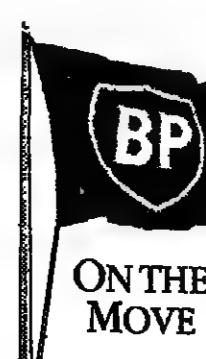
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Star quality and a silent secretary

As Chris Patten, Tory chairman, and Robin Cook, Labour health spokesman, clashed on the BBC Nine O'Clock News on Thursday over Labour's election broadcast on health, viewers might have wondered what had happened to William Waldegrave, the health secretary.

In fact, Mark Damazer, editor of the programme, had asked for Mr Patten and Tory central office was pleased to oblige. Mr Waldegrave being a less inclusive performer than either Mr Patten or Mr Cook. The BBC wanted Mr Patten because the focus of the issue had switched to central office. When Mr Waldegrave admitted late on Thursday that the Conservatives had put the consultant in the case in touch with the *Daily Express*.

If Mr Patten had not been available, Mr Damazer would have faced a dilemma: should he settle for an imposed spokesman, scrap the item or feature only Mr Cook? Mr Damazer said: 'If they [central office] had said we could only have Gillian Shephard, Mr Patten's deputy, we would have had to tell Mr Cook that was the case and then questions of stature arise: will the main spokesman for one side debate with the vice-chair of the other?'

Television news and current affairs programmes, contrary to what most people think, have no obligation to interview people from all sides of an issue in a specific programme. The Representation of the People Act defines balance narrowly and mostly applies at constituency level where all parties or none have to be given airtime.

However, the BBC, especially, and ITN are sensitive to accusations of bias, a sensitivity that can give the political parties powerful leverage when trying to promote a politician other than the one the television programme wants. *Newsnight* is known to be involved in frequent battles over the make-up of discussion panels.

Glyn Mathias, an experienced broadcaster who is

But it is not only a question of parties hiding people. The airtime constraints are severe as well.

Our overall attitude is that we must be balanced, but the stopwatch which so many people talk about is only one way of measuring that balance. Being fair to all sides cannot just be measured on a clockface.'

Mr Damazer says that the obligation to be fair and impartial is not just a matter of time. 'The stopwatch is one measure among several, but I do not live or die by it.'

Some media analysts have been surprised by the way the Conservatives, in particular, are playing this election on television. Derek Tettleton, media analyst at Klemmert Benson, says: 'The Tories have clearly wielded some power in keeping Mrs Thatcher out of the limelight, but it is less easy to understand why Michael Heseltine, a powerful television performer, has not been used more. The absence of people like that has meant that so far this campaign has been a firework party that never got going: a few bangs but no real spectacle.'

This week Paddy Ashdown answered the accusation that the Liberal Democrats were a 'one-man band' by saying that the media insisted on interviewing him. Des Wilson, the Lib Dem campaign director, said yesterday: 'At the daily press conference there is always at least one and usually two other senior party figures, but the bulletins almost always use Paddy.'

Perhaps the reality was identified by Mr Tettleton: 'Television wants someone with star quality, so who do you go to if not Paddy? Alan Beith?'

Ashdown plays devolution card as poll slump threatens to leave party in the wilderness

Scots greet silver-tongued Sassenachs with disdain

ARCHY Kirkwood, the Liberal Democrat candidate for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, became almost apoplectic yesterday when an interviewer dared to suggest that Paddy Ashdown, for all the razzmatazz, stirring music and presidential addresses, had failed to move the Scottish electorate.

The latest poll, by System Three for *The Herald*, showed yesterday that Liberal Democrat support had slumped to 7 per cent, compared with the Alliance's 19 per cent of the vote in the last election, indicating that the party could lose some of its ten Scottish seats on April 9. But Mr Ashdown's visit, designed to charm the electorate into a frenzy of moderation, was no more and no less effective than the visits of any other party's leading lights.

Mr Ashdown, John Major, Margaret Thatcher and Neil Kinnock, not a Sassenach as he hails from Wales, have all sought to jerk the Scots out of their entrenched positions. The visits, apart from providing a momentary diversion, have left things much as they were. After all, Mrs Thatcher could hardly be expected to change the course of history by speaking in Killearn, one of the richest and most Tory

The debate on Scotland's future will become ever more complicated, whoever wins the election.
Kerry Gill writes

villages north of the border. Voting in Scotland is expected to mirror recent polls, which have changed little since the start of this month. In two weeks the constitutional debate will become more focused. If the Tories win, albeit with a significant reduction in seats in Scotland from the nine they held in the last parliament, they will again be accused of having no mandate to govern the Scots. At least three quarters of the electorate will say, with reason, that their preferred constitutional option for Scottish government has been ignored. Mr Major has delivered a couple of obscure hints that things might change. Should the Tories be returned with a reduced Scottish representation, the prime minister has said he will "take stock" of the situation — whatever that means.

This week he said that while he was confident that the Tories would do better than expected in Scotland,



Long road ahead: Charles Kennedy, the Lib Dem party president and candidate for Ross, Cromarty and Skye, enjoying the bracing air in his constituency

Where the main parties stand



Labour: a Scottish parliament elected by an additional member system. Powers to levy tax and to legislate for local government, health, housing, education, transport and the environment. Property tax to replace the poll tax.

SNP: independence within the EC. 20 per cent tax rate on first £3,000 of taxable income. Removal of national insurance contributions ceiling. A Scottish general election within a month if SNP won majority of seats.

Conservative: a pledge to defend the union and retain the constitutional status quo. The Conservatives say the United Kingdom is greater than the sum of its parts. Introduction of single tier councils in Scotland. Poll tax replaced by local income tax.

Lib Dem: home rule with "fair votes" system. Formation of Scottish parliament with broadly similar powers to those envisaged by Labour, part of a federal set-up in Britain. Poll tax replaced by local income tax.

decisions on the country's future would be made at a later date. "They are an intensely proud, patriotic race here in Scotland. They have been part of the active union for 280-odd years. It has served the United Kingdom well and particularly it has served Scotland well. We must discuss these at great length and then take decisions."

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Russian hardliners seize on suicide rate as political weapon

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

ONE Russian in every 150 — more than a million people — tries to commit suicide every year, and 60,000 of them succeed, Dr Gennadi Osipov, director of the Institute of Socio-Political Studies, claims.

Dr Osipov was addressing a conference on Russia's future at which participants seemed to revel in black assessments of the suffering and disaster caused by the state of the country. He said opinion surveys by his institute showed that one in five Russians wanted to emigrate, a statistic that he cited as evidence that the nation was on the threshold of disaster.

Tatiana Koryagina, a conservative economist, told the conference that 90 per cent of

the Russian population had fallen below the poverty line and 30 per cent were living at the "lowest depth" imaginable. While these revelations are both plausible, they are most unlikely to be entirely disinterested.

On the one hand, it would be amazing if the upheavals brought about by the collapse of the old system did not have traumatic consequences for individuals, from the building worker who tried to burn himself alive in Red Square this month to the establishment figures who killed themselves after last year's failed coup, not least among them Boris Pugo, the interior minister who was one of the coup leaders.

On the other hand, every

scrap of evidence about despair and misery in the Russian population is being marshalled for political purposes, as conservatives prepare for a big counter-attack on President Yeltsin and his radically pro-market cabinet at next month's Congress of People's Deputies.

Another study in Russia gives a somewhat lower figure of 40,000 suicides a year, and estimates that there are ten failures for every death. That would translate into a rate of 27 per 100,000, up from a low point of 19.1 in 1987 but broadly in line with levels in the early 1980s.

Other surveys suggest that men are far more inclined to take their lives than women, and are more successful in doing so. In 1987 the suicide rate per 100,000 was 30.7 for men and 9.3 for women.

The suicide rate is much the lowest in the northern Caucasus, where the Muslim faith and strong family ties appear to provide individuals with a sense of self-esteem and worth that is missing from the alienated world of Russian cities.

Some experts have pointed out that there is no direct correlation between economic hard times and the suicide rate. They say that the number of people taking their own lives has often fallen steeply during wars, revolutions and disasters.

If there is to be a decline resulting from economic reform, it seems more likely that it will come in the next phase, when soaring prices give way to large-scale factory closures. These closures will surely prove devastating to the self-respect of countless managers and skilled workers who have spent a lifetime learning to make industrial goods and weapons for which, in a post-Cold War world, there is suddenly no demand.

A more precise indicator of public pessimism may be the birth rate in Moscow, which has been falling steadily for the past five years. Only 83,000 children were born in the capital last year, compared with 118,000 in 1988. It remains to be seen how the economic policies adopted this year — policies which have far more support among the young than the old — affect the figures.

From anecdotal evidence, Dr Osipov's estimate of one in five who will be emigrants sounds on the low side, but the figure would certainly be higher, among young people in particular, if the old-fashioned economic policies advocated by the conservative Mrs Koryagina were adopted.

Revolutionary roots: a Democratic Left poster

broken line of Communist mayors who have ruled Bologna, together with Socialists and Social Democrat councillors, since 1945. Such stability contrasts sharply with the 50 national governments.

The election in Emilia Romagna is seen as a key to the future of the new party. Achille Occhetto, the party's earnest secretary, wants it to become a rallying point for a new reformist left. But critics say the PDS has yet to define a clear identity: seeking to become all things to all men by embracing support for market economy and ecology.

The rival Socialist party hopes it is doomed.

"If the PDS received a bad knock here it would have national repercussions," said Giancarlo Pieraccante, a journalist covering the Bologna campaign for the party daily, *L'Unità*. "Bologna is a symbol." The PDS inherited the newspaper and the elegant Bologna building for its offices from the PCI.

At the last election, in 1987, the Communists were the largest party in Bologna with 42 per cent, and in Emilia Romagna with 47 per cent, compared to their national showing of 26 per cent. Davide Visani, the PDS national organiser, is braced for some losses to the Communist Refoundation, which has won a legal battle to use the hammer-and-sickle as its electoral symbol. The PDS has adopted an oak.

Pugo: took his life after coup attempt failed

The Italian Communist party (PCI) became the Democratic Party of the Left in February last year. Some romantics found the rupture with 70 years of class struggle unbearable and formed a breakaway party, the Communist Refoundation. In pragmatic Bologna, where the local party was the first to denounce events in Czechoslovakia, Poland and Afghanistan, 85 per cent of the former Communists supported the change. "We have never been ideological here," Signor Imbeni said.

He is the fourth in an un-

Cossacks sign up as mercenaries in new wars of conquest

THE Cossacks of the Don are hiring themselves out to fight battles far from their homeland.

In Moldavia, Don Cossacks are reported to be paid up to 5,000 roubles (£300) a month to defend the Russian-populated Dniestr mini-republic against the majority Romanian-speaking Moldavians.

And in the north Caucasus, Don Cossack patrols are checking vehicles on their way to the rebellious Chechen region, searching for weapons and, allegedly, looting some.

The Terek Cossacks, for their part, do not have to travel hundreds of miles to fight Russia's border wars. The Chechen insurgents seeking independence from Russia are on their doorstep. Grozny, the Chechen capital, was founded in 1824 as an outpost of the Terek Cossack line against the Chechens and other Caucasus Muslim nations.

Four decades earlier, the grandly-named town of Vladikavkaz, or Lord of the Caucasus, had been founded as the headquarters of

The Cossacks, the sword arm of the tsars, are trying to resume their role as defenders of the realm, writes Anatol Lieven from Vladikavkaz

the Cossack line. It had taken the Russian empire and the Cossacks all those decades to push that much further into Chechen territory. Today, the descendants of the Chechens are determined to push that line back again — and the descendants of the Cossacks are just as determined not to be pushed back.

At a meeting in Vladikavkaz last month, the Cossacks voted to revive their old imperial military name, the Terek Cossack Host. A majority of speakers called on President Yeltsin to give them arms to defend the Russian minority in Chechnya.

After a letter was read out detailing alleged Chechen oppression of Russians, one of the Cossack leaders declared to shouts of approval: "War will begin in late spring or early summer. We

must prepare for it. No one else will help us." Meanwhile, the Kuban Cossacks have demanded the separation of their territory from the north Caucasian Muslim republics, and the Cossacks of the Urals and of the Semirechiye have demanded separation from Kazakhstan.

Rightly or wrongly, the Cossacks regard themselves not as immigrants, but as a Caucasian ethnic group with roots going back hundreds of years. They have, in fact, become thoroughly mixed with the Caucasian nations. This was apparent from the racially disparate faces at the meeting. The uniforms and hats of the Cossacks were taken straight from their Caucasian adversaries.

In the Caucasus, no-one is laughing. The Cossacks here wear their uniforms with the air of men who feel at ease

in them, and that is also how they handle their automatic weapons. Cossack weapons and organisation are generally thought to come from Russian hardliners in the former Soviet armed forces.

The entire leadership of the Terek Cossacks is made up of serving or retired officers: the orchestrators of the proceedings at the Terek meeting were a huge plain-clothes colonel from an unidentified branch of the army, and a tough, small officer in battle dress from the special forces.

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The Cossacks also see themselves as an oppressed people, ferociously persecuted under Lenin and Stalin

for having sided with the Whites in the Russian Civil War. As a result of the defeat of the Whites, some areas conquered by the Cossacks under the tsarist empire were returned to their Caucasian adversaries. In such disputed regions, all

over the north Caucasus, populations are squaring up to each other in ways which still fall short of war, but which could be heading in that direction.

A typical incident took place last year in the Sunzhensk district of Che-

Aeroflot airliner damaged by missile

Moscow: An Azerbaijani missile damaged an Aeroflot passenger plane flying from the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh to the Armenian capital of Yerevan yesterday, but the pilot landed safely, Armenian officials here said.

According to Mikit Kazaryan, a spokesman for the Armenian mission in Moscow, a Yak 40 Aeroflot jet with 30 passengers and four crew on board was hit by a heat-seeking missile over the Gelsbadzhar region soon after taking off from Stepanakert. The missile did not explode, but damaged an engine on the plane's tail. The pilot was able to shut the engine down and land safely in Yerevan on two engines.

The attack came as the two former Soviet republics agreed to extend a precarious ceasefire in the disputed enclave until peace talks could start. (AP)

Turkey blames media reports

Istanbul: Suleyman Demirel, the Turkish prime minister, said Bonn's decision to suspend all arms shipments to Turkey was based on a "misunderstanding" that German-supplied arms had been used to quell Kurdish demonstrators in southeast Turkey. (Andrew Finkel writes). A statement said the German action was based on "wrong and misleading press reports."

In Bonn Dieter Vogel, the government spokesman, said Germany intended to maintain its embargo on arms deliveries to Turkey.

Looking west

Paris: Ukraine sees little future for itself within the Commonwealth of Independent States and is basing its hopes on eventually joining the European Community. Lionel Stoieru, an economic adviser to Ukraine, said here. (AP)

City blocked

Bucharest: As the ruling National Salvation Front opened a three-day congress here, several thousand protesters blocked the city to demand the return of Moldavia, which Romania lost to the Soviet Union in 1940 when Stalin annexed it. (Reuters)

Siren sounded

Paris: Greenpeace sounded a nuclear warning siren and unfurled a banner at the Arc de Triomphe after its activists were prevented by the French navy from setting up a "peace camp" at the Mururoa atoll nuclear testing site in the Pacific. (Reuters)

Maltese elected

Valetta: Malta's opposition Labour party has elected Alfred Sant, an economist, aged 43, as its leader after losing last month's elections to the Nationalists. A graduate of Boston and Harvard universities, he succeeds Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici. (Reuters)

Condom barred

Montreal: The Canadian affiliate of McDonald's has obtained a court order blocking a sex shop from selling McCondoms, claiming that it was using its proprietary "Mc" prefix. The firm must now destroy all its unsold McCondoms. (Reuters)

Argent



Tiger tamers: two Siberian hunters subduing a wild tiger with bare hands in the taiga near Russia's Far Eastern city of Khabarovsk. The men are among the few hunters who still catch tigers without weapons

Serbs split Bosnian republic

FROM DRAZEN TICIRIAN AND TOM JUDAH IN BELGRADE

A YUGOSLAV air force jet fired rockets at a factory in the northern Bosnian town of Bosanski Brod, police in Croatia reported, as Serbs announced the constitution of their own republic in Bosnia-Herzegovina yesterday. Armed clashes and shooting incidents threatened to destroy hopes that a Bosnian civil war could be avoided.

In a ceremony in Sarajevo, local Serb leaders said they were "laying the foundations of a fourth Serbian state in Yugoslavia". The declaration came as Muslims and Croats on the Bosnian presidency sent a message to the United Nations appealing for military observers to help bring calm to the republic and accused Serbs of terrorism.

Yesterday Bosnia sent three leaders to check reports that civilians had been killed in continuing fighting in Bosanski Brod. Three people were injured by an explosion in a cafe in Mostar and Serbs accused Croats and Muslims of killing ten civilians.

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Pugo: took his life after coup attempt failed

Mitterrand's willing devotee queues up for Cresson's job

FROM PHILIP JACKSON IN PARIS

JACK LANG'S unabashed worship of President Mitterrand is a standing joke in French politics, especially among rivals and critics of the ruling Socialist party, but the minister of culture might still have the last laugh.

In the past few days, as the government has struggled to come to terms with its humiliation in last Sunday's regional elections, M. Lang, who doubles as spokesman for the Elysée Palace, has manoeuvred his name on to the list of potential replacements. Should Edith Cresson be dropped as prime minister,

he finds himself mentioned in the same breath as such weightier candidates as Pierre Bérégovoy, the finance minister, and Jacques Delors, the European Commission president hovering off-stage in Brussels, a tribute to M. Lang's powers of self-promotion: his only previous cabinet experience has been in his present culture post, though he manages it with panache.

Aged 52, he is young compared with those Mme Cresson calls the Socialist "elephants" and is much more assured, persuasive and attractive on television. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to most of his cabinet colleagues, he won a handsome personal vote in the regional poll. It is certainly no coincidence that M. Lang has been popping up with even greater frequency on television since the regional polls.

According to the Socialists' self-styled "professionals", M. Lang is too much of a lightweight for the prime ministerial job. His numerous enemies within the party machine point gleefully to the widespread ridicule he attracted recently when decimating Sylvester Stallone for outstanding services to arts and letters.

While M. Lang continues to

make mischief, Mme Cresson

appears to be mustering her forces for a determined attempt to persuade M. Mitterrand to keep her on at the head of a significantly restructured government. Sources close to the prime minister

are busily leaking suggestions

that she has repeatedly asked the Elysée to be allowed to mention some of her policies in favour of well-qualified people outside politics and representatives of France's increasingly popular environmental movement.

As it happens, one of her

present ministers, Brice Léonard, head of the Génération Ecologie faction that did

well in the regional contest, is now in deep trouble with the Socialists. Always unpredictable, the environment minister reacted to the result by declaring that he

was not interested in any

"union with the left".



Soldiers of fortune: Cossacks with their mounts in the prewar Soviet Union

himself in front of their womenfolk. Incidents like this are the sparks flying around in the north Caucasian powder-keg.

Major Vassili Konyukhin, the ataman of the Terek Cossacks, is bitterly opposed to Chechen independence but also opposes the demands of the Cossack radicals for an immediate armed Cossack paramilitary movement.

As a first step, he wants the restoration of lands and rights taken from the Cossacks, local autonomy and the creation of Cossack regiments within the Russian army.

The prestige of this second world war fighter pilot comes from the medal on his chest — Hero of the Soviet Union. This did not, however, prevent him from being killed when he said that the Cossacks were not yet ready to take up arms.

But if fighting does break out, the Cossacks will not lack for training or leaders.

The rows of hard-faced officers at the meeting in Vladikavkaz made that all too clear.

Aeroflot
airliner
damaged
by missile



Washington: attacked
where enemy was weak

US accuses Tripoli of abusing UN

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN THE HAGUE

LIBYA was using the International Court of Justice to shield itself from Western outrage over its refusal to surrender two men suspected of the Lockerbie bombing. America's lawyers told the judges yesterday.

The court yesterday completed the first round of hearings into a request from Colonels Muammar Gadaffi, the Libyan leader, that it should prevent any moves to apply United Nations sanctions against his country. The Libyans argue that America and Britain have breached the Montreal Convention on air terrorism by their moves in the UN Security Council to force Libya to give up the two men for trial. Britain and America contend that the convention does not apply to states that sponsor terrorism.

The 16 judges will sit again today and may issue their ruling within weeks. But a full judgment on the main case brought by Libya may take up to two years.

Edwin Williamson, the American State Department's legal adviser, told the court that Libya's case was an attempt to avoid the consequences of years of supporting terrorism by setting two parts of the UN system, the security council and the court, against each other. The case was, he said, "the first

example in the history of the court of a state trying to use the court to undo the work of the security council."

The bomb attacks on Pan Am Flight 103 and a French UTA flight destroyed in 1989 were "blatant and obscene violations" of international law. "I am sure you can understand the outrage of the United States and, I am certain, of the 32 other states whose nationals were murdered, and at the thought of Libya trying to use the court to shield itself from international condemnation," Mr Williamson said.

But Libya's sudden tactical lurch towards legal action in the UN's own court has forced America into a switch of its own. American diplomacy towards Libya over Lockerbie has combined hints of military action with working for a consensus in the security council. Yesterday, the State Department's quartet of lawyers laid emphasis exclusively on peaceful diplomacy inside the United Nations. They did not sound convincing.

On Thursday, Ian Brownlie, QC, professor of international law at Oxford University and one of Libya's counsel, had plausibly described a remark made by Vice-President Quayle as a cold-blooded hint that the 1986 American bombing of Tripoli could be repeated.

Descriptions of the last moments of Flight 103 on December 21 1988, also still have the power to chill the blood even if the statistics are now dreadfully familiar. Trial documents may describe the deaths of 270 people as an "serial incident", but the court was hushed as Alan Rodger, QC, the Scottish solicitor-general, recounted the moment when the plane disintegrated and fell out of the winter sky.

Graham Bickley, who starred in the television comedy *Bread*, and Dave Willets, of *The Phantom of the Opera*, are to take over lead roles in the hit musical *Les Misérables* at the Palace Theatre, London, from April 27.

Lord Callaghan, the former Labour prime minister, will receive an honorary fellowship from University College, Swansea, today to mark his 80th birthday. Lord Callaghan, president of the college since 1986, was a Cardiff MP for 42 years until he stood down in 1987.

The Prince of Wales was applauded by onlookers as he visited the Keats-Shelley museum in Rome at the start of a private visit to Italy. His visit is part of the celebrations marking the bicentenary of Shelley's birth.

Muhammad Ali, the former world heavyweight boxing champion, and Mike Udley, the Detroit Lions football player who was paralysed last year, will today talk to about 800 young American Indians about the importance of self-esteem, at the annual Native American Youth Weekend.

JERRY Brown was exhausted. Bill Clinton was recovering from an explosive attack of rage, and only President Bush seemed in any comfort — and he was resting after a five-hour thyroid examination. All in all, the New York primary campaign yesterday resembled a parade of the dead.

Governor Clinton, whose calm in the face of persistent personal attacks has impressed even his enemies, lost his temper on Thursday night when an AIDS activist used the phrase "dying of ambition" to contrast the candidate's condition with his own. These three words somehow snapped the governor's self-control.

A crowd of New York lawyers, who had paid up to \$250 (£145) to hear their choice for president at a midtown Manhattan restaurant, then heard

ing immediately cited the incident as proof that the Democratic front-runner for his party's nomination was unfit for the White House. "The American people do not want a president who loses his cool under pressure," one said. The news of Mr Clinton's outburst came conveniently on the day Mr Bush's doctor said that the president needed less stress, a lighter schedule and more holidays.

Governor Clinton's supporters tried to turn the clash to their advantage, suggesting that the voters of New York had a long tradition of liking "flesh-and-blood can-

candidates" who could give critics as good as they got. But the immediate winner was Jerry Brown, the former governor of California, who won proof that his guerrilla assault on his rival was drawing blood.

Mr Brown has become the latest of New York's instant stars. His campaign was even compared by one observer yesterday to that of George Washington against the British. "attacking where the enemy is weak, retreating where the enemy is strong, and travelling light". Snowy New Hampshire, where Mr Brown was ignored and overwhelmed in February, was his Valley Forge. Connecticut, where he won a surprise victory on Tuesday, was his Saratoga. Now, would his Yorktown be New York?

The primary is still almost two weeks away. As Governor

Clinton's aides continually have to say to themselves, their lead in delegates is more than seven-to-one. Under the system of proportional allocation, their candidate would be arithmetically vulnerable now only if he stopped winning any votes at all.

But Mr Clinton will not stop winning votes as long as he stays in the war. That is why Mr Brown, temporarily backed by the baying New York media, has only one strategy — to force a final retreat and surrender.

Yesterday *The New York Times* reported how, in 1988, Governor Clinton exempted himself from the conflict-of-interest provisions of a state ethics law. The deletion of the provision, which would have covered his wife Hillary's legal work for the state government, took place during a private drafting session at

Connecticut, where electors were struggling with tax returns and nobody bothered to work out what it meant. In New York it is not so good. Here Democratic taxation gurus, such as Senator Daniel Moynihan, have shown convincingly that "Brownism" only makes the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Mr Brown is as tired as Mr Clinton. He cancelled events on Thursday because "he hasn't been eating, he hasn't been sleeping, and he's losing his voice", an aide said. He has, however, been winning. He is flushed by attention and success. He is said to relish the comparison with George Washington: as one of his New York workers pointed out yesterday, among the defeated commanders in the pivotal Saratoga campaign of 1777 was one Sir Henry Clinton.

US to buy Russian space reactor

Washington: In an abrupt easing of Cold War trade restrictions, the Bush administration announced yesterday that it had authorised the purchase of \$14 million (£8 million) in space technology and nuclear fuel from Russia (Martin Fleicher writes).

The decision will allow the Pentagon to buy the Topaz space reactor and four Hall thrusters for manoeuvring space vehicles, while the energy department will buy plutonium 238 for space power supply. Until now the White House had opposed purchases that could prop up the military-industrial complex of the former Soviet Union and delay its conversion to civilian uses. That policy was opposed by various government departments, NASA and scientific institutions eager to buy Soviet technology at bargain prices.

Tyson fights on
Washington: Lawyers for Mike Tyson, sentenced to six years' jail for rape, were returning to court yesterday to contest a judge's ruling that the former heavyweight boxing champion should not be freed on bail pending his appeal against conviction.

Warrant issued

Delhi: The chief judicial magistrate of Bhopal has ordered that a warrant of arrest be issued to initiate extradition proceedings against Warren Anderson, who was chairman of Union Carbide at the time of the Bhopal disaster in 1984.

Hanging halted
Johannesburg: South Africa has reversed its widely criticised decision, announced earlier this week, not to delay the execution of prisoners sentenced to death. Hanging has now been stopped while constitutional talks are in progress. (AP)

Rebels attack

Nairobi: Rwandan rebels claimed in a statement released in Kampala that they killed more than 300 government troops in Ngarama district near the Uganda border. Radio Rwanda said the rebels forced 7,000 people to flee their homes.

Mercy denied
Peking: Wei Jingsheng, China's longest-serving political prisoner who was jailed for leaking state secrets, will not be released before he completes his 15-year sentence in 1994 because of "poor behaviour", Cai Cheng, the justice minister, said. (AP)

Iron man dies

Sydney: Lang Hancock, who discovered some of the world's largest iron ore reserves in Pilbara in Western Australia, in 1952, has died at the age of 82. His fortune of about £38 million has been contested by his daughter and his third wife. (Reuters)

Women helped

Peking: Decades after Mao declared that "women hold up half the sky", China has unveiled a new bill to counter sexual discrimination at work, in the home, at school and in the law courts. The bill is expected to become law on October 1. (Reuters)

Sushi strikes

Tokyo: Three Japanese gourmets were critically ill after eating blowfish at a fashionable sushi bar in Nagasaki. Part of the fish's attraction for gourmets seems to be flirting with death if any part of its highly poisonous liver and ovaries are eaten. (Reuters)



Rock of faith: Palestinian girls praying yesterday on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Behind them is Islam's holy shrine, the Dome of the Rock, where police estimated up to 200,000 Arabs turned up to worship the previous Friday during the month of Ramadan

America braced for wave of executions

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

STATE governments across America are re-equipping their gas chambers and electric chairs to deal with a surge in the number of death row prisoners who are reaching the end of their tortuous appeals.

California, with more than 300 condemned men in its jails, is due to perform its first execution for a quarter of a century on April 21. Arizona will carry out its first official execution in 29 years on April 6. Delaware recently executed its first prisoner for 46 years.

The United States Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in America in 1976. But only 166 men and one woman have been executed since then, most in half a dozen Southern states. With more than 2,500 men and women on death row, however, the pace of executions is increasing as prisoners exhaust their appeals.

Ten men were executed in the first three months of this year, compared with 14 in the whole of last year. Experts say there could soon be dozens of executions a year as states try to eliminate the backlog.

"The American public wants it. They're fed up with the criminals getting away with murder and they want to see them pay," said Ernie Prete, Pennsylvania's attorney-general.

The death penalty is in force in 36 states but only 18 have used it since the 1976 supreme court ruling. Three-quarters of the executions were carried out in the South — Texas, Florida, Louisiana, Georgia, Virginia and Alabama.

California, however, is now the focus of attention. After 13 years on death row, during which he has had his execution postponed five times, Robert Alton Harris is due to go to his death on April 21 for the murder of two teenage boys.

Pete Wilson, the governor of California, has said he will grant Harris a hearing on clemency, even though he is not obliged to. But the governor's move seems geared more to preparing America's biggest state for the shock of a resumption of executions than to reprieving Harris.

Even if the governor does decide to grant Harris clemency, the approval of at least four members of the state's highest court would be needed to cancel the execution. But the court is now dominated by judges appointed by the Republicans and favourable to capital punishment.

Rail strike bewilders Japanese

FROM JOANNA PITMAN
IN TOKYO

A RUSH-HOUR railway strike affected six million Japanese commuters yesterday and caused amateurism in Tokyo and other cities where harmonious industrial relations are taken for granted.

Japanese unions generally steer clear of industrial action, politely confining their occasional ritual demonstrations to lunch-breaks when, having notified the management, they don red headbands and shout slogans in an orderly fashion.

But yesterday members of the general federation of private railway and bus workers' unions cancelled morning rush-hour trains for almost six hours, while their leaders negotiated with the management over the annual wage increases.

By 10.20am Japan's first big strike for 11 years was over. The federation had retreated from its demand for a monthly wage increase of over 16,000 yen (£70) and accepted the management's offer of 15,700 yen.

Dhaka fears rise as Burmese stay put

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DHAKA BAZAR

TEN bamboo towns are growing up amid the rice paddies of southern Bangladesh. Tailors have unpacked sewing machines, shopkeepers are setting up stalls and an air of permanence is taking hold. The Dhaka government's fears are coming true.

Nearly 200,000 Burmese Muslims, known as Rohingyas, have so far fled into Bangladesh to escape rape, forced labour and beatings. Most days about 6,000 more arrive. At least 100,000 people are living in the open. Relief agencies are hurrying to erect enough shelters before the monsoon arrives.

There is a sense of relief, almost joy, among the Rohingyas at making it this far. Most were subsistence farmers in Burma's Arakan province. Few want to go home, despite Bangladesh's insistence that they cannot stay permanently. They feel at home here: their language, a mixture of Bengali, Arabic, Burmese and the Chittagong dialect, is much the same as the local rural tongue. During British times, farm labourers from what is now Bangladesh worked in Arakan during the harvesting season and large numbers settled permanently.

Bangladesh says there were 2.2 million inhabitants of Arakan, 1.4 million of whom were Rohingyas. Burmese regards them as ethnically non-Burmese and is using thousands of forced labour to build runways and other military facilities in Arakan.

Anwar ul Islam, a political leader in the Bangladesh border area, said the Rohingyas were his brothers.

"We are Chittagonians, they are Rohingyas: there is no difference. We have interacted for centuries. But they are Burmese and we are Bangladeshi. They must go back."

But the Rohingyas show every determination to stay. "I do not want to return," says Ahsan Katun, aged 30, who has just arrived with her eight children. "I was raped by soldiers. So was my daughter. We have left our land for good."

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Clifford Longley

Market forces too often clash with social justice

The late Friedrich von Hayek derided "social justice". It was a term, he said, which ought to be driven from the English language. Nor did he believe in God. Perhaps there was a connection.

The opening entry under Justice in Karl Rahner's classic *Encyclopedia of Theology* is strikingly headed: "The social sense of justice in the Old Testament". What is clear from both the Old and the New Testament traditions is that justice as administered in the courts, the forensic kind, is only an Aristotelian subset of a much wider justice which permeates the Judeo-Christian system. There is really no such thing, in that system, as justice which is not social.

So the concept of social justice which Hayek rejected is up to 4,000 years old, probably as old as monotheism itself. Such a tradition constantly develops, and a definition is hard to pin down, but involves, at least, a concept of obligation towards those in need who are not protected by the mutual duties of family life. The obligations of social justice predate such laws as are enacted by societies. They are, so to speak, among the higher obligations imposed by God, binding irrespective of temporal law.

In the case of extreme necessity, social justice says the starving have a right to bread, the diseased to treatment, the naked and homeless to shelter. Those with bread have an obligation to give to those without. Voluntary benevolence on the one hand, gratitude or "deservedness" on the other, do not come into it. If those with bread default on their obligations, the starving may take it (and may even have a duty to take it) and yet will not be morally guilty of stealing. Indeed, society may take the bread (or the means to buy it) by force, if necessary, to pass to the poor. The poor have an entitlement, not the hope of a gift if they are lucky or well-behaved.

This assumption was common to Old Testament Israel and medieval tithe, under which a compulsory tax of 10 per cent was paid to the monastic houses to look after the poor. It was also the assumption behind the first Poor Law in 1601, when all those with property became obliged to contribute to parish relief.

The history of the British welfare state shows it to be a clear development from these ancient ideas. It preserves the concept of an obligation to those in need, and of society having an inescapable debt towards them. In the process, however, social justice has become increasingly confused with the pursuit of equality, with "fair shares for all", although that is not implied by the scriptural sources. Indeed, social justice is essentially a code for coping with inequality, and preventing it from having inhumane consequences.

In the Bible, in medieval times and afterwards, inequality was accepted, sometimes as necessary, sometimes as desirable. The Old Testament Wisdom literature, for example, describes a just man as one who conducts himself so prudently in his dealings with his equals and those below him that he profits by them. And Jesus' remark "The poor are always with us", while not meaning to glorify poverty, conveys a relaxed acceptance of some economic inequality.

Opposition of this view began in the late 18th century, when the workings of laissez-faire economics were treated (a little obliquely) by Adam Smith as if they were the consequence of natural laws under God's invisible guiding hand, and by Thomas Malthus as the one true version of social justice, even though it was a justice which passed death sentences on the innocent. The struggle to uphold the Christian notion of social justice against such radical political economists, Hayek's forebears, was a long and bitter one. Thousands died, not least in the Irish famine, victims of the belief of their masters that any intervention in the workings of a market was a kind of sacrilege.

With the emergence of the welfare state, the crueler consequences of extreme laissez-faire were finally rejected. Today, the current election debate on the welfare state is being conducted within either the premises of Judaeo-Christian social justice, or even, in health care, to the left of that, within what Hayek would call the "socialist" assumptions of egalitarianism.

The liberal economics of Hayek's system are as radically incompatible with this debate as they are with Christianity and Judaism. If social justice has one statement to make to economists, it is that economics is not an autonomous science but one under judgment. It is Judaeo-Christian social justice that decides when economics — Hayek's or Marx's or any other — has found the right answer: not vice versa.

Peter Riddell looks back on a week in which neither party has made a decisive breakthrough

The war of Jennifer's ear

RIDDELL ON THE ELECTION

It may be starting to work. It is too early to assess the damage from Jennifergate. Television pictures of politicians and journalists abusing each other are best summed up by the title of a recent American book on the media's pursuit of presidential candidates, *Feeding Frenzy*. Labour produced the much disputed broadcast, but the Tories were involved in the subsequent media row. So both may suffer, possibly to the benefit of the Liberal Democrats, who have been able to damage each of them. Much depends on how far the affair has obscured or attracted attention to health, which is Labour's best issue by far.

Is the campaign as uninspiring as it seems? Yes, because the parties have little new to say. So many of the issues were exhaustively argued before the election, and the party machines are so

determined to minimise any risk of errors, that the politicians sound stale.

How have the leaders done? John Major has shown his strengths of quiet authority, charm and reasonableness in informal meetings and interviews. But his public speeches have often been muddied by a desire to be a world-weary headmaster above the partisan battle; for Labour, Mr Smith, as well as the old trooper Roy Hattersley, and Bryan Gould; for the Liberal Democrats, the ever-reasonable Alan Beith. On the other side, William Waldegrave badly mishandled a defensible Tory position on Thursday; Jack Cunningham has at times been overshadowed by more assertive colleagues with a sharper edge such as Michael Heseltine and Kenneth Clarke.

Neil Kinnock has been fluent and self-confident, though at times somewhat tense, as he has exercised tight self-discipline.

over his natural ebullience. Padley Ashdown has carried most of his party's campaign, avoiding the pitfalls of dual leadership and attracting notice by stressing a rise in education spending.

Who else has done well or badly in the campaign? For the Tories, Mr Heseltine, Mr Clarke and Douglas Hurd as a world-weary headmaster above the partisan battle; for Labour, Mr Smith, as well as the old trooper Roy Hattersley, and Bryan Gould; for the Liberal Democrats, the ever-reasonable Alan Beith. On the other side, William Waldegrave badly mishandled a defensible Tory position on Thursday; Jack Cunningham has at times been overshadowed by more assertive colleagues with a sharper edge such as Michael Heseltine and Kenneth Clarke.

What is going to change now? If tomorrow's batch of polls shows a continuing, even increased, Labour lead, attention will shift to the possibility of a Kinnock government. Television programmes are likely to give closer scrutiny to Labour's policies and to Mr Kinnock as a potential prime minister. The Tories will seek to frighten undecided voters back to their

camp by attacking Mr Kinnock's leadership, Labour's tax policies and its economic competence. They also hope that Mr Kinnock will make mistakes when under greater pressure.

Labour hopes to maintain the momentum of its so far successful campaign by returning to health, as well as education, unemployment and its recovery programme. A close finish and talk of a Kinnock government may squeeze Liberal Democrat support, especially in the south-east. But if the media focuses more on the possibility of a hung parliament, the Liberal Democrats may benefit.

Can the Conservatives still win? Twice since the war poll ratings have moved during the campaign sharply back towards the governing party, in 1951 and 1959. The parties are now so close that a small shift could give the Tories the largest number of MPs. But a bigger change is needed for the Tories to win an overall majority. So, prepare for the possibility of a hung parliament and another election later this year.

Writing history's first draft

John Grigg on the difficulties posed by the latest volume of the story of a great newspaper

Twenty-five years ago, *The Times* was embarking on a new period in its history, under a new chief proprietor and a new editor. At the end of 1966, control of the paper passed to the Canadian-born Roy Thomson, and early in the new year William Rees-Mogg was appointed editor. Although Roy Thomson died in 1976, to be succeeded by his son Kenneth, the Thomson/Rees-Mogg regime lasted until 1981, when Rupert Murdoch bought *Times* Newspapers.

This period, 1966-81, will be covered in volume VI of *The Times's* official history, on which I have been working for several years and which will soon be finished. Volume V, written by Verach McDonald, appeared in time for the 200th anniversary of the paper in 1985. It described William Hale's editorship, but also gave an alternative version of Munich, the war years and the immediate post-war period, already covered in volume IV.

The first four volumes were published anonymously, but it is no secret that they were edited and largely written by the typographer and *Times* character, Stanley Morison. The first came out in 1935, on the paper's 150th anniversary.

Writing the history of an institution has been a new experience for me, so I have found it quite a challenge. Like the earlier periods, mine is full of political, journalistic and human interest, and in one respect it is unique, since it contains the unprecedented trauma of the stoppage of the paper for nearly a year in 1978-9. Management problems have obtruded from time to time in other volumes, but have never bulked so large as this.

The Thomson takeover had the important effect of bringing *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*



On the brink of closure: William Rees-Mogg telling reporters in 1981 that *The Times* will shut unless a buyer is found

nately there is a little book in the *Times* archive which shows the authorship of leaders. Although, like the rest, Rees-Mogg's editorials were unsigned, he did not otherwise follow the example of his predecessors in shunning publicity, but gave many interviews.

Another distinctive feature of the paper to which I give due attention is the obituary column, which was still without a serious rival during the Thomson period. References to them crop up throughout the book, and I have also discussed the feature in some detail.

There was a blast of protest from family and friends at the obituary, in 1975, of Sir Denis Lowson, in which it was said that he "began his career in the City before the war, when the

standards of financial morality and duty to shareholders were less developed than they are today", and added that he had shown he was "more concerned to turn situations to the advantage of himself" than with his "fiduciary duty". In retrospect, it is the comment on the City that seems the more surprising.

Despite the then recent legalisation of sexual relations between consenting adult males, homosexuality remained a taboo subject in obituaries throughout the period, though occasionally the time-honoured formula "he was unmarried" gave way to more elaborate evasiveness. A prime example is the obituary of Benjamin Britten, where he is said to have had a "nonpareil reciprocal partnership" with Peter Pears. They were "artistically

the making of each other, just as socially they proved ideally attuned when they came to share their home at Aldeburgh, a favourite resort of their innumerable friends of both sexes".

Perhaps the greatest of all features of *The Times*, to which I hope I have done justice, is the page of Letters to the Editor. In 1971, an American journalist wrote an article about the letters which so impressed Senator Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut that he had it reprinted in the *Congressional Record*.

During the Thomson period the number of letters received rose steeply, and in one year, 1968 (when Enoch Powell made his Birmingham speech on immigration) it rose by 13,000. The correspondents also became more various, with politi-

cians, the City, Oxbridge, clergy and barristers less predominant than they used to be.

Often the best letters were, as they are still, the shortest. Commenting on a long signed article by Rees-Mogg in 1977 on the subject of productivity, which showed that one Dutch man-hour was the equivalent of two British, a reader in Twyford wrote that this was a "considerable improvement on our performance 300 years ago... Samuel Pepys on February 13, 1665, wrote 'But to see how despicably [the Dutch] speak of us for our using so many more hands to do anything than they do, they closing a cable with 20 that we use 60 men upon'."

A paper is indeed lucky when it can command such copy, unsolicited and free of charge.

...and moreover

PHILIP HOWARD

Two more attempts to reform the English language and make it fit for the modern world are being launched. This week the Simplified Spelling Society announced "English spelling for the new millennium [sic]", either setting out in exemplary fashion as it means to go on, or committing a mistake with a word that is notoriously easy to mis-spell. Shortly hereafter, *Glossa*, a "grammar-free" international language based on Latin and Greek, which people should be able to grasp in an hour, is being introduced with a 6,000-word dictionary. (The *Glossa* people mean free of accident or inflections: by definition, no language can be free of grammar, which is merely the way its parts work.) These reformers follow in the deeply trampled footsteps of a noble army of linguistic crusaders who have broken their pens and their heads against the absurdities of English grammar and spelling.

The spellers want to remove the redundancies from English spelling, and to this end are publishing a *Handbook to Cut Spelling*. Orthography is a delicate topic for a publication that vomits as many words as hastily as a daily newspaper, but to quote the reasons of the rationalisers: "harmonising variations — such as *head/bed* giving *hed* — wud help lerners and assist riters jenry."

English spelling is an ancient and tangled hedge. Perhaps the only way to untangle it is in this way, as it were with a mechan-

ical pull, instead of by gradual billhook-work down the centuries. But there are grave objections, on which all previous attempts have crashed. You lose something of value by reforming even the dottiest spellings, which are the gnarled trunks that record the history of words, like tree-rings. That noise and unpronounced "b" in debt is a fascinating record. The word arrived into Middle English from Old French as *debet*, in the approved Cut Spelling form. By the 16th century, pedants (jurists) had inserted the "b", to show that the original source of the word was the Latin *debitum*. The unpronounced "b" is an antiquarian signpost, and signifies the connection with *debit*, *debt*, *debture*, and the rest of the family. It does not always improve the environment to replace a thousand-year-old hedge with tidy barbed wire.

A more formidable argument against re-spelling words to match pronunciation is that we are never going to agree on whose pronunciation to match. It may be that *hed* is the way they pronounce *head* at Aston University. It is certainly not the way they pronounce *head* in Belfast, Glasgow, or Atlanta, Georgia. English is spoken in thousands of mutually contrasting and sometimes incomprehensible dialects, from the Hip-Speak of the ghettos of Los Angeles to the screeches of Strine. There is no reason why a new spelling should reflect the posh pronunciation of a tiny minority of English-speakers.

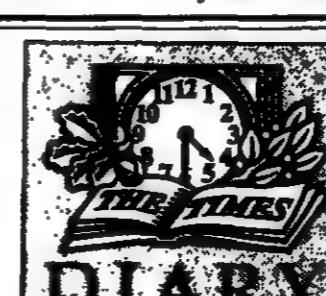
Hall of fame

JULIE HALL'S discomfort this week has increased speculation that if Neil Kinnock wins the election she will not be offered the top Downing Street press job most famously occupied by Bernard Ingham.

Few doubt that Hall would be given a job in Kinnock's Number 10 team, but suggestions were growing yesterday that the Labour leader will ask the advice of Sir Robin Butler, the cabinet secretary, about a suitably qualified civil servant to head his press office — and the name on several lips is Whitehall. Aged 53 and head of information at the department of health for the past six years, Christopherson has retained a strict impartiality which has earned her the respect of all sides.

As prime minister, Kinnock would have the option of appointing a political outsider or opting for a career civil servant to handle his press relations. Westminster gossip has long suggested that Hall is not destined for the top press job in government. Another name mooted is Alastair Campbell, political editor of the *Daily Mirror*, but he has always insisted he would not be interested in the job.

Whitehall sources believe that Christopherson, a graduate of St Hugh's College, Oxford, is just the sort of professional heavyweight Kinnock would need. If she were to be offered a job by Kinnock, Christopherson would enjoy the rare distinction of serving the two most bitter political rivals of the past decade. Before moving to health she worked for Mrs Thatcher as Bernard Ingham's deputy for two years, including the Falklands war.



• So when the history of the 1992 election is written, how will this past week of campaigning be remembered? Jennifer Riddell calls it "Eargate". Glue-gate? The war of Jennifer's ear, as Peter Riddell suggests, please.

Vicarious pleasures?

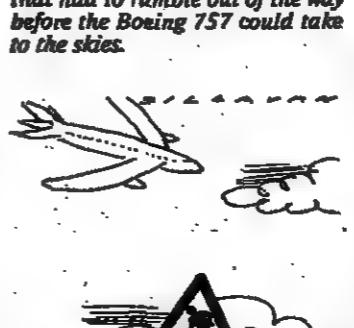
THE Archbishop of Canterbury's assertion that the nation spends too much time thinking about sex has been strongly rebuked in at least one rectory. Parishioners of St Margaret's at Heveringham, Norfolk are being urged in the parish newsletter to buy copies of an explicit guide to improving sexual and human relationships called *Making Love*.

The book written by Linda Sonntag, who lives in the village, is accompanied by a video, currently at number two in the best-seller list. The Rev Leslie Hopkins, a middle-aged bachelor who was sent a complimentary copy by Sonntag, says in the newsletter: "This is a book characterised by robust clarity based on reputable research. This volume will become widely used by those interested in human relationships. It demands to be read. Well done, Linda."

Sonntag admits she did not expect an endorsement from such an unlikely quarter. "But Leslie is a

very forward-thinking rector. Encouraged by his response I have sent a copy to Lambeth Palace."

• Unlikely excuses of which even British Rail has not thought: a pilot on the British Airways shuttle from London to Glasgow announced this week that the flight would be delayed due to "roadworks". Something to do with contractors at Heathrow and a low-flying JCB that had to rumble out of the way before the Boeing 757 could take to the skies.



Brush off

A MOST unlikely player entered the election fray yesterday. The Lady. In an interview in the current issue, Norma Major confides: "What I do like doing is taking a room apart and cleaning it. If there is dust around I quite enjoy taking the dust off and washing all the things that need to go back on the clean surface."

Readers of the main editorial page then find that the world's habitual cleaners — of which Mrs Major is a fine example — are given a severe dressing down. "Messy members of society are, by and large, content and relaxed. The 'excuse the mess' brigade are tense, dustered over at the ready to

say a report from Women in Management in Publishing. The group, set up by Carmen Callil, Gail Rebuck and other leading women publishers last year, surveyed more than 4,000 book reviews in 17 national newspapers, and describes the findings as "depressing". Less than a quarter of all titles reviewed were by women, while more than three-quarters of all reviewers were men. Worst offenders in WIMP's table of blis are the Financial Times and The Independent. Least sexist, of course, is The Times.



THE WILL TO RULE

Tory election campaigns usually hit trouble in mid course. Three times under Margaret Thatcher, the party had to take stock and surge forward afresh. Three times the result was successful, though in no case was the task as tough as it is now. Yet for all the polish of the Labour campaign and for all the clever packaging of its leader, the old maxim cannot be repeated too often: oppositions do not win elections, governments lose them. Nothing Labour can do over the next ten days can guarantee Mr Kinnock the keys to Downing Street. For that to happen, the Tories must, like the broken governor of an exhausted empire, first lose the will to rule.

Some of the shortcomings in the Tory campaign were unavoidable, given the controversial selection of April 9 as the election date. Others are as yet superficial. The campaign was called at the wrong moment, in the aftermath of a responsible but dull Budget. Oppositions are not subject to the same constraints as governments. Having played a sober budgetary game, the Tories duly invited Labour to hit the ball all over the field in John Smith's shadow version. The Tory response to that was negative. It emphasised Labour as the high taxation party, but in a way that made the Tories sound merely like a high income party.

A downmarket advertising campaign was meant to reinforce subliminal working-class worries about Labour as the harbinger of inflation, high taxes and untrustworthiness. A series of knocking posters and television advertisements may yet prove smarter than they appear, but they had about them the harsh ring of the early Thatcher years. Their negative message conflicts with the image of the party's leader, John Major, as a fair-minded and objective statesman. They are reported being abandoned.

Meanwhile the party's campaign manager, Chris Patten, has been allowed to vanish to his own marginal constituency of Bath for a few hours most days. The result has been a diminished sense of promotional grip. As the bags under Mr Patten's eyes deepened this week, so did the confusion surrounding the Jennifer Bennett affair. To respond to a Labour dirty trick on hospital waiting lists, not by stressing the government's respectable health record, but by backstage intrigue with a tame Tory newspaper, was the apex of undignified ineptitude. It was certain to focus attention on an issue of known advantage to Labour, drowning any message beneficial to the Tories in a cacophony of media rivalry.

The Tories are as yet unable to come to terms with the change in Labour campaigning since 1987. On most salient issues, notably health, education and unemployment, the Tories are now even further behind Labour than they were in the previous two general elections. The electorate apparently no longer regards either trade unions or defence — both areas where the Tories have a 'big' advantage over Labour — as important. The Tories are strongest in areas of least concern to voters and weakest in areas of their greatest concern.

The party managers therefore decided to avoid campaigning on their own performance. Instead they snatched at fragments of Labour party policy, to blacken them as grim unions-with-socialism. Labour's biggest bugbear was its poor image as a manager of the economy. Yet the Tories have been so mesmerised by the depth of the recession that they have been unable to exploit this advantage. They have come to sound like a party of opposition, consuming precious daily sound-bites by protesting at the evils of Labour's programme. Mr Major speaks too much like a cautious Treasury apologist, forgetting that the homely platitude of a politician is more user-friendly than the dry jargon of an economist. The gulf between the leaden spokeswoman of most members of the cabinet and the Archie Rice performances of Michael Heseltine has become embarrassing.

SAY IT FOR FLOWERS

This is the weekend when the advertising arm of the florists' trade exhorts Britons to say it with flowers for Mother's Day. In less strident tones, the wild flowers give the same message every day of the year, particularly in the imminent month of April, with the daffodils still making the heart dance by Ulswater, violets and primroses pushing up in the ditches, and even cowslips creeping back on the East Anglian headlands, where they had been almost blasted off the face of the clay by the weeding of the grain barons.

In their quiet way, wild flowers are a peculiar excellence of the United Kingdom. They make it a green and pleasant land, spotted with pointillist colour. God signed his name in the heavens with shining stars, and on earth with wild flowers. In these cloudy islands, the flowers are usually easier to see than the stars.

But flowers are more than decorations. They are very ancient parts of our landscape and history, as well as records of the passing centuries. For creatures that are by definition and proverbially ephemeral, they have deep roots. Modern oil pipelines across the fields throw up teazels that have lain dormant in the clay for centuries. A *Domesday Book* for British flowers, *Flora Britannica*, as announced in today's *Weekend Times*, is about to survey the state of our floral heritage, recording where wild plants stand in our culture and society today.

Some of them are ancient English markers. The English unofficial rose goes back heaven knows. We still kiss under the mistletoe, without realising that our custom has folk reasons that may descend from the original and authentic Druids, the wicked twigs that killed Balder, and the geographically impossible superstition that Christ's cross was made from its wood. It is not necessary to believe in any of these reasons.

Labour's strategy, so far largely successful, has been to neutralise the negative aspects of its policies, and thus reduce the sticking power of Tory knocking copy. The party has rigorously cast off its old election incubus of trade union corporatism and unreliability on defence. It has plugged health, education and unemployment and goaded the Tories into reaction. Apart from that Labour has sat tight and waited for the Conservatives to lose heart or make mistakes.

The Conservatives must now surely campaign more positively on their achievements in office, even at some risk of focusing on the electorally risky 'high salinity' issues. After 13 years of reform, a government must be able to field a coherent defence of its past administration. The Tories' guardianship of British interests in Europe has been creditable. The merits of privatisation, industrial relations reform, higher school standards, shorter hospital waiting lists, contracted-out local services, should all be palpable to the electorate.

There is still time for the Tories to turn their campaign onto a more positive tack. Mrs Thatcher emerged from mid-campaign 'wobbles' by seizing the whip, taking a firm grip on the reins and galloping off towards the battleground and victory. This is the example John Major needs to emulate, if his first great electoral test is not to be his last. To win, he must rise above the rough-houseness of his subordinates. He must play down his weaknesses, his nervous rally speeches, his wooden phraseology, the lack of any electrical charge in his appearances. He must find a way of playing to his strengths, his common-or-garden niceness, his appeal as a hardworking and competent manager, his direction of the nation through a delicate period of European history.

The most surprising political phenomenon of the 1980s was the revival of 'strong government conservatism' in many Western democracies, after decades of leadership based on consensus. The two prime exemplars, Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, won election after election despite fierce antagonism from their opponents. Their political stance was radical, far more so than that of the political left, since it rejected the dominant welfare ethos of post-war government. It sought, or at least said that it sought, to dismantle much of the corporate state and return decision and choice to individuals.

The resulting paradox proved electorally potent. Mrs Thatcher and Mr Reagan condemned modern government, yet both of them gave it a new purpose and direction. They asserted the leadership role of their offices and clothed that role in strong personality. Mrs Thatcher did not pretend to consensus. She never enjoyed a majority of the popular vote in Britain. But she was able to exploit Britain's electoral geography and emerge as a confident winner, giving the Toryism of the 1980s a remarkable ideological thrust.

Mr Major has eschewed that thrust in a studied return to the politics of the centre. The result was electorally sensible, but it drew from the party much of the political excitement that 'strong government conservatism' gave his predecessor. He will now have to galvanise his campaign by projecting personal qualities above and beyond those of his colleagues. He must demonstrate what John Keegan in his book on generalship says is the first duty of leadership, gaiety. He must appeal to the voyeurism of democratic elections. Voters expect from their leaders sudden glimpses of ambitions and foibles, a moment of humiliation, a dashing recovery, a final cry of triumph.

This weekend seems likely to be the moment when one of the closest elections since 1970 is won or lost. Mr Kinnock is showing no sign that he intends to give in. Labour has lost three times, and for Mr Kinnock that is enough. Mr Major has now to find the will to win. He can only find it from within himself.

UK citizens abroad

Election and the health service: diminishing the issue

From Mr Nicolas Walter

Sir, The current posturings of the politicians and the media have as usual obscured the real situation of the health system, as of the wider social system in this country.

The fact is that we have always had not a two-tier but a three-tier system in health, as in so many other essential services (housing, education, caring, etc) — a private commercial service for the rich, a public welfare service for the poor, and a middle in between for the people in between — the first supported by the financial advantages of charity and company law, the second supported by the devotion of the staff and the patience of the patients, and the third supported by the uneasiness of the government, the fourth by the spin doctors.

In the same way there has always been a three-tier structure within the system: well-paid professionals and managers at the top, ill-paid workers at the bottom, and the rest in between.

Anyone who has had much to do with the NHS — as I have for more than 40 years — knows that it has always been both extraordinarily inefficient and extraordinarily effective, and also that it has been possible to get quicker if not better treatment by paying extra for it, or else by knowing how to say the right thing to the right person in the right way.

Argument either about this general bad situation or about particular hard cases is pointless unless it addresses the essential inequality of the system — and of the wider society beyond — and asks what kind of health system we really want in theory and will really support in practice.

Yours etc.
NICOLAS WALTER,
88 Islington High Street, N1.
March 27.

From the Reverend Dr Ian Bradley

Sir, Surely the most depressing aspect of this whole sorry affair is that the catalyst which has finally set the election campaign alight is not a debate over policy, nor even a personality but rather television commercial.

It is, I suppose, inevitable that in a society where politics like so many other activities has become a matter of image, style and presentation rather than content and substance, the most exciting thing that politicians can find to argue about and journalists to write about is an advertisement.

But it is neither politicians nor journalists who should take the blame for this — the real villains are the advertising executives, public relations persons, image consultants, media managers and massagers, that whole shadowy and sinister army who have come to be known as the spin doctors.

Their techniques of manipulation and management are so successful that what most of us will remember best about this campaign, aside from its mind-numbing boredom and the sickening bickering, will be flippancies like the party theme tunes and logos, the fireworks and the elaborate stage sets used for rallies and press conferences. Truly the medium has become the message.

I fear that even *The Times* seems to be conniving in the spin doctors' takeover with so much of your election pages devoted to "medicawatch" and, today, "advertising". Might we have more reporting of the mood of the communities up and down the country and a little less on the latest triumph of presentation or public relations disaster?

Yours etc.
IAN BRADLEY,
7 Stratfield High Road,
St Andrews, Fife.
March 27.

From Mr Peter D. Rossdale

Sir, A package marked "urgent medical supplies" addressed to the local medical centre was today delivered in error to my office. In the present climate of debate, was this the fault of the government and, if so, was it due to underfunding of the Post Office or of the National Health Service? Further, would a change in government prevent such an error occurring after April 9?

Yours faithfully,
PETER D. ROSSDALE,
Beaumont Cottage Stables,
High Street,
Newmarket, Suffolk.
March 26.

From Mr C. G. Thorley

Sir, The Labour party's broadcast on health service delays raises a wider question which will remain important when the election is over and the recent incident is forgotten.

We have come to accept programmes "based on fact" in the fields of entertainment and advertising, but are we prepared to accept a blend of fact and fiction in respect of current affairs, where the effect and possibly the purpose is to influence public opinion?

Yours faithfully,
C. G. THORLEY,
Preston House, Coton Denham,
Sherborne, Dorset.
March 26.

From Dr Gwenda Crosby

Sir, Would that I had the funds to make a film of my experiences when trying to get patients admitted and treated at the hospital where I worked during the "winter of discontent"?

Yours etc.
GWENDA CROSBY,
15 Pencliffe Road,
Cardiff, South Glamorgan.
March 25.

Questions arising in murder case

From Mr Arthur Davidson, QC, and others

Sir, On March 13 a man appeared at Chorley magistrates' court charged with conspiracy to murder. He was remanded in custody.

The press and therefore the public were unaware of the court appearance. It was not until four days later, when he appeared again (report, March 18), that the arrest and the earlier hearing became public knowledge.

There may be a reasonable explanation for this unusual step, but there is a clear public interest in the media reporting the progress of a murder enquiry. Any such reporting must not prejudice the right of the accused to a fair trial.

There is statutory and common law protection to ensure this. But if the media are not aware that someone is arrested in connection with that enquiry, let alone charged with a serious offence, something could be published which might unwittingly be damaging to the accused. Since the strict laws of contempt run from the time of arrest, the editor and journalists could well face prosecution.

There are circumstances where it might be in the interests of justice for additional reporting restrictions to be imposed. That is a matter for the court. Such a decision should be made openly after legal argument. The events of March 13 were disturbing and alien to the whole tradition of the British legal system. Steps should be taken to ensure that they do not create a precedent.

Yours faithfully,
ARTHUR DAVIDSON (Chairman, Fleet Street Lawyers' Society),
ALASTAIR BRETT (Secretary),
JUSTIN WALFORD (Research Officer),
Savile Club, 69 Brook Street, W1.
March 25.

Defendants' costs

From Mr David Harper

Sir,

Next month a trial will commence at Chelmsford Crown Court of about 15 individuals charged with offences related to public disorder in Colchester.

At the pre-trial hearing counsel estimated that the case would last several weeks. The defendants are young and mainly unemployed. Some therefore receive under £32 a week in benefit. Each of their weekly rail fares from Colchester during the trial will cost £24. Although this point was raised with the judge by counsel, both were unaware of any order which the judge might make to alleviate the problem.

If such is the case then — as Mr Spens said (letter, March 24) — where has the presumption of innocence gone?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID HARPER,
7 Braiswick,
Colchester, Essex.
March 24.

Weighing pigs

From Mr W. G. McPherson

Sir, The weighing of Irish pigs, as described by Mr Fred Carvalho (letter, March 24), may not have been quite so haphazard as it seems.

The "graded boulders" were probably handily shaped stones of known weight; these were in common use in this area in bygone days; indeed, I had two myself, with an iron ring fixed atop. I used them for holding open the garage doors.

I do not think the weight of the stones would have been "estimated" — the weight of each stone would have been known and the summation correct to a pound.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
W. G. McPHERSON,
37 Granary Street,
Hunton, Aberdeenshire.

Fox-terriers

From Mrs Betty Harle

Sir, The "two small dogs" depicted in Jacques Henri Lartigue's *Avenue du Bois de Boulogne*, as shown in *The Times* of March 24, are English smooth-haired fox-terriers.

They were very popular dogs in the early years of this century, and in France were known as "Le Fox".

This elegant and intelligent little dog is much rarer in England today. The Jack Russell having taken its place as a hunt terrier and family pet.

Yours sincerely,

BETTY J. HARLE,
Hawkeswell Farm,
34 Portland Road, Oxford.
March 24.

Sunday treat

From Mr Peter J. Beer

Sir, With the cards and flowers on Mothering Sunday I hope mothers will be offered simnel cake. Laurence Whistler, in *The English Festival* (Heinemann, 1947), cited three kinds.

The Shrewsbury kind has a thick crust; the Devizes kind is in the shape of a star; the Bury kind is flan-like, thicker in the centre, compounded of spicery, currants and candied peel and generally round in shape or elongated.

Yours faithfully,

PETER BEER,
2 Hill Cottages,
Reepham,
Nr Norwich, Norfolk.
March 22.

Our consuls are under instructions to visit detained British citizens as quickly as possible. They ensure that the detainees understand their rights, and know how to get legal representation; they take messages for families and, most importantly of all, they ensure that the prisoner is not suffering any discrimination on account of his or her nationality. If they are not satisfied on this last point, they take the matter up vigorously on the prisoner's behalf.

Finally, they can make representations on behalf of the prisoner if they believe that there has been a serious miscarriage of justice. But they cannot do this until the full legal process has been completed and all possibility of appeals has been exhausted. This stage has not been reached in any of the cases in which Mr Jakobi has so far shown interest.

Yours faithfully,
MARK LENNOX-BOYD,
Foreign & Commonwealth Office,
London SW1A 2AH.
March 26.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

BITUARIES

LORD BRIGINSHAW

Lord Briginshaw, who died yesterday aged 83, was general secretary of the National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel (Natsopa) from 1951 to 1975 and one of the more militant voices in the deliberations of the TUC. He was born in Lambeth in 1908.

RICHARD Briginshaw was, in his day, one of the more radical left-wing trade union leaders and as such he played a major role in the many trade union disputes which afflicted Fleet Street, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. These disputes were vigorous, not to say ruthlessly prosecuted in an era of weak newspaper managements which would rather pay periodic Danegeld than confront the enemy. As a result Briginshaw and his members became some of the country's best-paid workers.

Briginshaw was a fierce opponent of incomes and trade union legislation by both Labour and Conservative governments and he was consistently hostile to the idea of Britain's joining the European Community. He became president in the 1960s of the Forward Britain Movement, the most left-wing of the groups opposing membership. In this capacity he wrote a number of pamphlets and addressed hundreds of meetings up and down the country. When Britain did join the community he became a joint founder of the Get Britain Out Campaign.

Within the printing industry, he was a believer all his life in a single printing union, and he appeared to have brought about a big step in that direction when, in the late 1960s, he negotiated a merger between his own union, the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants, as it then was, and the larger National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and

Paper Workers. He became joint secretary of the resulting Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (Sogat).

But printing union leaders make uneasy bedfellows, and Briginshaw himself was a natural autocrat who liked to have the last word on even the smallest matter on which he was involved. So after disagreements, recriminations and threats of legal action, the two sections fell apart and the joint union was only reconstituted after Briginshaw had retired.

His retirement was itself clouded by scandal, when he and two colleagues were sued by the union for sums of money outstanding on property transactions which he claimed had been undertaken to protect funds from possible seizure under industrial relations law introduced in the early 1970s. After a high court hearing Briginshaw and his co-defendants subsequently agreed to pay a sum of money to the union.

Richard William Briginshaw grew up in south London and started work as a printer's devil at 14. But he studied economics and law in his spare time and earned a diploma from University College London. At one time or another he worked in the machine room of almost every office in Fleet Street, the stronghold of Natsopa. In 1938 he became secretary of the London machine branch — the youngest official in the union — but his career was interrupted by six years in the army, mostly in India and the Middle East, and three years back at his trade before election as a national officer in 1949. He was elected general secretary in 1951.

In 1967 he published a pamphlet proposing a state-owned printing corporation to provide plant and facilities for publications to compensate privately-owned newspapers. A couple of years later he brought off the merger with the NUPBPW, with two



autonomous divisions each retaining its general secretary. It did not work and fell apart. But the rancour subsided and in his last year of office Briginshaw presided over a new TUC printing industry committee. In 1972, Briginshaw as a member of the economic committee refused to take part. Natsopa's

had originally preferred. During the Heath government of 1970-74, Briginshaw was one of its most adamant union opponents. When the TUC agreed to talks with the government in 1972, Briginshaw as a member of the economic committee refused to take part. Natsopa's

own operations were little affected by changes in the law, but Briginshaw's imagination was fired and he embarked on the ill-starred manipulation of union funds which ended in the courts 10 years later.

Briginshaw and his co-defendants insisted that various

property transactions under their names, and the movement of funds to Switzerland, had been approved by the executive in accordance with union policy, solely to protect the funds with no intention of fraud or personal gain. Eventually the case was settled on confidential terms for a "substantial sum" in 1982.

By this time Briginshaw had completely retired from public life after serving on the council of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas), the British Overseas Trade Board and the British National Oil Corporation. After his busy career of authorship on behalf of the Forward Britain Movement, his final filing was another pamphlet, *British Oil: the Big Sell-out*, when he left BNOC in 1979. He was also a member of the court of Cranfield Institute of Technology and, although he was a powerful advocate of socialist education, was for six years a governor of Dulwich College.

He became a life peer in 1974, following it up a year later by denouncing the House of Lords and declaring that he would work for its abolition.

Briginshaw was a tall, vigorous man who was fond of painting, music and swimming, and had a way of making provocative statements followed by a firm, half-smiling stare from behind his heavy spectacles. As an industrial negotiator, as an industrial disruptor as a routine tactical weapon, but was cautious about deploying it.

He made a point of being well turned out, and was said to have spotters "negotiating shoes" always at hand in his car to put on before going to a meeting.

Lord Briginshaw is survived by five sons and a daughter.

DR JOHN SHEEHAN

Dr John Clark Sheehan, American chemist who pioneered the synthesis of penicillin, died of congestive heart failure at his home in Key Biscayne, Florida, on March 21 aged 76. He was born in Battle Creek, Michigan, on September 23, 1915.

EVERY schoolboy knows that penicillin, the first of the life-saving antibiotic drugs, was discovered almost by accident by the Scottish biologist Alexander Fleming in 1928. But there was no accident about the work of John Sheehan, who took on the seemingly impossible task of reproducing the natural phenomenon in synthetic form and finally succeeded after nine years of painstaking research.

In this they were aided by another Sheehan discovery: the production of an intermediate compound in the form of a basic penicillin nucleus to which various other chemicals could be attached. The significance of this was that penicillins could now be developed to target particular bacteria.

In more than three decades as a professor at MIT John Sheehan came to hold about 30 patents. Among them was ampicillin, a semi-synthetic form of penicillin which, unlike its predecessors, could be taken orally rather than given by injection.

Sheehan spent almost all his professional life in his home state. He graduated from Battle Creek College, and took master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Michigan. His teaching career began in 1946 at MIT, where he became a full professor in 1952. In 1953-4 he was in London as scientific liaison officer to the US Embassy's office of naval research. He was a scientific adviser to both President John F. Kennedy and President Lyndon Johnson. His one book, *The Enchanted Ring: The Untold Story of Penicillin*, was published in 1982.

APPRECIATION

JIM JOEL

YOUR excellent obituary (March 25) concentrates, understandably, on Mr Joel's involvement in racing. He was also generous, warm-hearted and understanding. I first met him in 1976 when he was already 81 and I was 28. My initial involvement was as a junior partner, helping to sell the main part of Childwick Bury. I had in

common with him a fascination in horses and, from then on, was lucky enough to be treated as a friend and given an insight into his legendary hospitality.

Despite an age difference of 54 years, I was never made to feel other than an equal. The years rolled back as he recounted, with absolute clarity, stories of personalities he had met before the Great War.

Anthony Case

LIVES REMEMBERED

A COLLECTION of 180 obituaries from the 900 or so published on this page during 1991 has been produced in book form, edited by David Heaton and John Higgins, under the title *Lives Remembered*.

The bishops, judges and peers who traditionally occupied the obituary columns now mingle with businessmen, TV stars and sportsmen. The infamous may occasionally rub shoulders with the famous — all walk and conditions of life are represented.

Lives Remembered, fully illustrated and with a foreword by Lord Annan, is available at £19.95 from the Blewbury Press, 10, Station Road, Pangbourne, Berks. RG8 7AN (Tel. 0235 850110. Fax 0734 843336).

Mail order coupon on facing page

March 28 ON THIS DAY 1966

minutes, then I got into the car and took it to the police. Pickles saw it first — he found it, the little darling."

More than £6,000 has now been offered in rewards for information leading to the recovery of the cup. Throughout the weekend squads of detectives and policemen visited derelict houses in South London, lifting floorboards, examining walls and searching gardens.

It was disclosed on Saturday that the eight-sided top of the cup had been sent by post to Mr. Joe Mears, chairman of the Football Association and of Chelsea F.C. Mr. Mears also received a demand for £15,000 ransom for the return of the rest of the cup.

This followed a telephone call to him at his home near the Chelsea club, earlier in the week, from a man who told him he would be receiving a parcel. Then on Wednesday a brown paper parcel, bearing a London postmark, was delivered to him. He found it contained the undamaged top of the trophy.

The same day there was another telephone call from a man who said that if he was satisfied with the parcel he should put an advertisement in a London evening newspaper saying "Willing to do business — Joe". Mr. Mears acted on the request, and after the advertisement had appeared in the paper he received another telephone call and a meeting was arranged. But in the meantime Mr. Mears had told the police.

The cup disappeared from a stamp exhibition at Central Hall, Westminster, a week ago.

Edward Walter Bleasley, aged 47, dock labourer, of Grosvenor Terrace, Camberwell, S.E., was remanded in custody until a week today at Bow Street Magistrates' Court on Saturday accused of stealing the World Cup from Central Hall, Westminster, on March 20.

URSULA FLEMING



Ursula Fleming, pain therapist, died on March 17 aged 61. She was born on October 19, 1930.

THROUGHOUT the 1980s Ursula Fleming concentrated increasingly on efficacious pain relief, reducing patients' reliance upon drugs where that was feasible, acknowledging the benefits and strengths of hospice care and spending hours herself at the bedside of the dying. She made available cassettes on pain relief for use by those who could not get immediate access to her. Many of her insights and experiences in this field of work are contained in her book *Grasping the Nettle: A Positive Approach to Pain* (Collins Fount, 1990), which is aimed at all readers. Much of the work leading to this book was carried out at the Oxford Regional Pain Unit, Sobell House, and at the Royal Free Hospital, London.

Ursula Fleming came from a medical family and while, initially, her life appeared to take another direction as she trained to be a concert pianist, the vocation of healing soon came to the fore. At the age of 19 she took up the study of relaxation techniques under Gertrud Heller, working at the Crichton Royal Hospital, Dumfries, after which she worked at Wimpole Street, London.

Bringing up her family, one

daughter and three sons, became her principal occupation for some years, though she continued to receive patients and extended hospitality to them as and when the opportunity allowed. She was a very keen painter of portraits and landscapes, and years later would speak with great enthusiasm about a week long holiday outside Avignon devoted entirely to landscape painting. This activity enabled her to set aside, temporarily, her own and other people's problems, but even here she used the exercise to sharpen her own powers of observation and concentration.

When she resumed full time work as a therapist she had to contend with considerable resistance from some quarters of the medical profession, but she herself had no doubts about the soundness of her approach, which was amply supported by the positive results experienced by her patients. Increasingly, she considered physical health in the context of spiritual welfare. She had witnessed the disorientation and lack of equilibrium experienced by large numbers of people who had tried to explore esoteric teachings without due guidance and was in a position to help many of these. While understanding exactly what prompted people to look for personal solutions outside the framework of their own reli-

gious tradition, she herself was immensely grateful to be firmly rooted in the Roman Catholic faith in which she had been brought up. She spoke knowledgeably and with great authority about the techniques of religious tradition in a secular society.

Frequently, with impulsive-ness and great humour, she would express a desire to get away from the urban jungle and set up on some remote

Pallis. Eckhart's sermons on "self-forgetting" assumed a central place in what Ursula Fleming could teach about coping with high levels of pain.

She worked tirelessly, travelling extensively in this country and Ireland to lead conferences and religious retreats. Her long years of friendship and collaboration with Dr Conrad Pepler led to their becoming joint founders of the Eckhart Society in 1987. The following year saw the publication of a collection of Eckhart's writings, introduced and edited by her.

Two ideas dominated her life and work: family and the vocation of healing. She was enormously proud of her own four children and their various achievements, and frequently, in her later work, she referred to bringing up children as the experience from which she had learned the most important lessons. She greatly valued the close friendship she had with her two sisters Anne and Mary, firmly founded on active and mutual support. But her notion of "family" extended far beyond that and marked her relationships with an astonishingly wide range of people in this country, Ireland and elsewhere. With some she shared an irreverent sense of humour, with others she had an immediate affinity that allowed them to broach difficult and painful subjects

within moments of meeting her.

In June 1991 Ursula Fleming's achievements were honoured by an award from the Templeton Foundation, which bestows awards, in particular, for the promotion of religious understanding.

In addition to overseeing the establishment and growth of the Eckhart Society as a much respected forum for religious dialogue, Ursula Fleming had other projects under way at the time of her death. In particular, she had hoped to train others in the techniques she had used successfully over so many years, and a training centre was about to be set up with the assistance of the Albertus Magnus Trust which had supported her previous work. Also, a project to provide a therapy centre close to Lourdes had been launched, with a number of short term visits there by Ursula and groups of patients. The success of these visits was, in large measure, due to her innate compassion and her ability to impart to others the deep sense of well-being that she herself experienced.

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Siberians threaten to abandon Russia

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN KRASNOYARSK, SIBERIA

MORE than 500 delegates from all over Siberia threw down a direct challenge to President Yeltsin's government yesterday, threatening to take Siberia out of the Russian Federation unless their region was granted costly economic concessions.

Reflecting growing impatience with being ruled from Moscow, Siberians accused Russia of treating them like "souless robots" and exploiting their region as if it were a colony, "except that no colony was ever plundered so thoroughly".

The All-Siberian Congress of People's Deputies brought

together most of Siberia's elected parliamentarians in the city of Krasnoyarsk. The congress has been the object of unusual advance interest, with Russian commentators warning that it could herald the first split in the Russian Federation based on economic and regional, rather than nationalist aspirations.

Government officials have remained aloof but they were evidently unhappy that members of parliament from all Siberia's constituencies have managed to organise themselves so quickly and so quietly into so threatening a force.

The fierceness of Siberian resentment became apparent soon after the opening of the congress yesterday as the deputies, passing all tedious formalities with the wave of their red delegates' cards in the best of communist traditions, got down to the serious business of attacking Moscow.

Top of the list were economic complaints. Siberians would have a per capita annual GNP as high as or higher than the average American but had not set aside so much for itself and polluted what was left, argued Boris Perov, the leader of the independence movement.

There was demographic resentment: Siberians were worse fed, had a lower life expectancy and produced fewer and less healthy children than their counterparts in central and western Russia.

Resentment of a purely regional character underlay many contributions. "Their problem is that they do not notice where Russia ends and the Russian Federation begins."

Among the documents handed over to the Americans were details of the death in Soviet camps of eight US servicemen, whose graves had been found recently by researchers.

Congressman John Miller said that he had seen nothing to suggest any former US prisoners were still living in Russia, though some might be staying of their free will.

Hardliners attack, page 14



Golden harvest: Gordon Hanks, a bulb expert, checking for quality amid a host of blooms at the Horticultural Research International's centre in Kirton, Lincolnshire. Tomorrow his skills will be under the scrutiny of women all over Britain when 70 million daffodils will be given to celebrate Mothers' Day

Strike by footballers looms

Continued from page 1

non-negotiable. "This is our final offer, and I will be meeting him to explain that it is fair and reasonable." In the meantime, the league has drawn up contingency plans, including taking legal action, in case the strike does go ahead.

As the two sides failed to reach agreement, the government made clear it would not intervene to prevent a high-profile strike beginning only days after the election of a new government. Robert Atkins, the sports minister, said: "It is simply an industrial dispute and it is up to the

two sides to reach agreement. The government certainly won't be getting involved at this stage. In fact I can't conceive that it will get involved, period."

In real terms, the Premier League's offer represents a sizeable increase. The PFA now receives about £700,000 from its Football League contract, of which the first division clubs contribute around £500,000, but with the clubs expecting to reap rich benefits from the breakaway league, the players are reluctant to see their percentage reduced so dramatically, particularly as the future of the

clubs left behind still uncertain.

With Aldershot closing and the fear that others may follow, the PFA's role in offering the sort of financial support that saved Bristol City, Middlesbrough and Wolves among others in the 1980s, is likely to become increasingly important when the Premier League starts taking Football League income. The money is also used to support education and welfare funds, the successful "Football in the Community" and youth training programmes.

Players' strike, page 36

'Heiress' jailed for £2m theft

Continued from page 1

she had spent about £2.7 million including a £65,000 surprise party for a close friend, £123,000 for the rent of a magnificent riverside flat and £80,000 to rent a yacht for a fortnight. She started humbly and then had "grander designs". Ms Fluancane said she was bound to be caught and a fresh audit was on the way last year when her boss discovered the thefts. She fled to Brazil abandoning plans for a £1,000 trip to Paris, a £4,000 outing to Henley Regatta and a £20,000 event at Wimbledon.

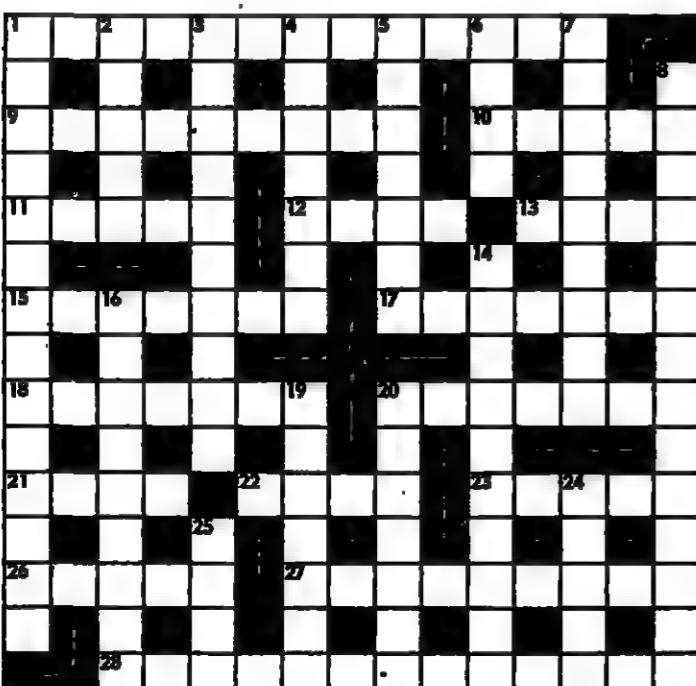
Graham Boal, for Aber-

dour, told the court that she was not an ordinary criminal or a sophisticated fraudster slating away funds. She had absolutely nothing to show for her crimes, "nothing except poverty, shame, her remorse, and the courage to answer the indictment". All the so-called friends who had won and dined off her ill-gotten gains had evaporated like the bubbles of champagne. She had poured money down other people's throats. Everything had gone and the pretty balloons had long since burst.

Abadour suffered from an impenetrable insecurity.

Life of luxury, page 3

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,878



ACROSS
 1 The flock of Shai's Uriah? (8,5).
 9 One who details recipes if ordered (9).
 10 Favoured the Spanish inn (5).
 11 Project put before ruler, constant-sounding chap (5).
 12 Related by blood, of a type mostly used up (4).
 13 In ancient times, behold, an alliance (4).
 15 Income balanced in the French way (7).
 17 His initial transpositions for preference included piano (7).
 18 Man is in the money from patterned fabric (7).
 20 Sweet, smaller desirable residence backing on to square (7).
 21 Old records do not include principal American conductor (4).
 22 Flag is displaying King and Emperor centrally (4).
 23 Keats's lakeside bird-scarer? (5).
 26 Lower digits include five gimmers (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,877

Solution to Puzzle No 18,877

DOWN
 1 Pop art is a prime development in nick (14).
 2 Religious leaders taking part in rule-making body (5).
 3 Fine and regal in a philosophical way (10).
 4 Parody of 6 (7).
 5 Sound of distress? (7).
 6 Response from the choir (4).
 7 Bad temper of coppers around Russian city (9).
 8 Current treatment for ropy candle here, possibly (14).
 14 He fixes plates of heroin and one of its derivatives (10).
 16 Agency finished with background commentary? (5-4).
 19 Preferring white bloomers in rows? (7).
 20 Contempt for India's day out (7).
 24 Tot before a crisis? (5).
 25 "A Man of the Field" (Book I) (4).

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which definitions are correct?

By Philip Howard

ENCRATY
 a. The upper lobe of the brain
 b. Absurdness
 c. To clobber
RETHARGITION
 a. Resting
 b. Refreshing
 c. Recrossing the sea
EXPODIATE
 a. To dig out
 b. Having lost its leaves
 c. A former ally
ZENANA
 a. The pink Tamil banana
 b. Farewell, goodbye
 c. A larm

Answers on page 18

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C London (within N & S Circ) 731

M1/M25/M40/M4/M5/M6/M25 723

M1/M25/M4/M25 724

M25/M40/M25 725

National

National motorways

West Country 727

Wales 728

Midlands 729

East Anglia 741

North-east England 742

North-west England 743

Scotland 744

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Devon, Cornwall & C. W. 703

Dorset & Cornwall 704

Wiltshire, Gloucester, Avon, Somerset 705

Beds, Bucks, Oxon 706

Bedf, Herts & Essex 707

Northumbria, Cumbria 708

North Mill & Shrop & Cheshire 709

Shrop, Hereford & Worcester 710

Central Midlands 711

West Midlands 712

Lincolnshire & Humberside 713

Yorkshire & Humberside 714

Gwynedd & Chwyd 715

N. & E. England 716

W. & N. Wales & Dales 717

Cumbria & Lake District 718

S. W. Scotland 720

W. Central Scotland 721

Ed. S. Fife/Lothian & Borders 722

Ed. Central Scotland 723

Grampian & E. Highlands 724

N. W. Scotland 725

Orkney, Shetland & N. Ireland 727

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Ed. Central Scotland

● BUSINESS NEWS 21-24, 31, 32
● WEEKEND MONEY 25-30
● SPORT 33-35

THE TIMES BUSINESS

SATURDAY MARCH 28 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL



Profile

John Grieves, senior partner at Freshfields, the City law firm, gets up at 5.30am and runs his regular 40 miles a week where he makes quite a few of his decisions. He averages four hours sleep a night, is always in the office before eight in the morning and used to work round the clock before he became a partner. Page 23



Ernie's secret

How to win the Premium Bond is one of the great mysteries of the world, although National Savings continues to tell people that the numbers are randomly generated. Page 27

Hedging bets

ECU Group foreign currency mortgage holders have been told this week that they could take out currency futures contracts to protect against falls in the pound. Page 27



Good listener

Jane Woodhead was appointed as a second building societies ombudsman last year because of a tripling in the number of complaints received in the first four years of its operation. She expects the number of complaints to double in the current year, which ends on Tuesday, a pattern that is expected to be repeated by other ombudsmen preparing reports. Increased charges and poor stock markets are pushing customers to complain. Page 25

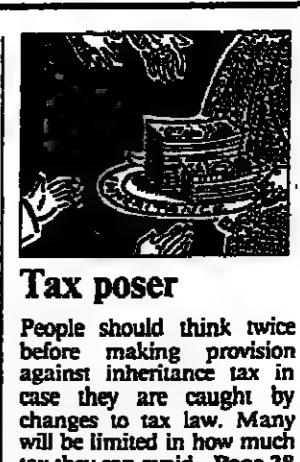


Yen for recovery

The Japanese market continued to fall this week and is standing at about half its 1989 peak. Some fund managers think there will be an imminent recovery, others are doubtful. Page 29

Check on cheque

The Co-operative bank is the first to change the wording in its cheque books to protect customers against fraud after changes in the law. Other banks are following suit. Page 26



Tax poser

People should think twice before making provision against inheritance tax in case they are caught by changes to the law. Many will be limited in how much tax they can avoid. Page 28

Election fears hit equities

BY MICHAEL CLARK

MOUNTING fears in the City about a Labour victory at the polls saw government securities and share prices fall sharply.

The FT-SE 100 index lost 24.3 points to 2,447.9 as a steady trickle of gloomy economic and political news sent investors running for cover.

Market-makers went on the defensive, marking shares lower as word circulated in the Square Mile that an opinion poll carried out for London Weekend Television showed Labour establishing a decisive lead over the Conservatives in London and capturing the capital's marginal seats.

Government securities suffered falls of up to 2% at the longer end as the Bundesbank said German interest rates would remain high for the foreseeable future. Johann Wilhelm Gaddum, a senior Bundesbank council member, said talk of an early interest rate cut was "without foundation".

Selling pressure was described as light. Most fund managers and investors were anxious to square up their positions before the weekend.

Banks were worried after learning that Heron International, the private company headed by Gerald Ronson, was in talks with its banks aimed at rescheduling its £1.2 billion of debt. Barclays, reckoned to have the biggest exposure to Heron, was the worst hit. It fell 13p to 332p.

Election 92, pages 7-12
Peter Riddell, page 16
Diary, page 16
Leading article, page 17
Letters, page 17
Market report, page 24

THE POUND
US dollar
1.7380 (+0.0120)
German mark
2.8561 (-0.0018)
Exchange Index
90.2 (+0.1)
Bank of England official
close (4pm)

STOCK MARKETS
FT 30 share
1914.9 (-23.4)
FT-SE 100
2447.9 (-24.3)
New York Dow Jones
3250.89 (-16.78)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge
19636.99 (-248.50)

INTEREST RATES
London: Bank Base: 10.1%
3-month Interbank: 10.1-10.4%
3-month eligible bills: 10.1-10.4%
US: Prime: 10.4%
Personal Funds: 3.9-4.9%
3-month Treasury Bills: 4.01-3.99%
30-year bonds: 10.02-10.02%

CURRENCIES
London:
\$1.7380
£ DM2.8567
£ SwF2.6033
£ FF9.6984
£ Yen121.53
£ Index50.2
ECU 10.714208
SDR 10.781032
£ ECU1.400156
London foreign market close

SOY
London Fixing:
AM \$340.35 pm \$340.50
CME \$1.35-\$1.36 (\$196.25-
\$196.75)
New York:
Comex \$341.95-\$42.45*

NORTH SEA GAS
Brent (May) ... \$17.90 bbl (\$18.00)

RETAIL PRICES
RPI: 136.3 February (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Disposals planned to fund repayments

Ronson seeks extension on £1.2bn debts

BY NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

HERON International, the second-largest private company in Britain, has called an emergency meeting with its bankers next week to seek more time to repay its £1.2 billion debts.

Heron, owned by Gerald Ronson, the entrepreneur behind the Guinness affair, said it would meet banks on Friday. Mr Ronson will ask for the maturity dates of its loans and Swiss bonds to be extended.

The group is expected to ask for 18-24 months extra to repay part of its debt.

The group has suspended its Eurobonds and Swiss franc bonds on the Swiss market until the meeting.

The value of the bonds had plunged on growing concern about financial problems at Heron, and yesterday's suspension they were priced at between only 30 and 43 pence cent of their face value.

Heron needs an extension on loan repayments falling due in the middle of next year. The group's problems have been caused by the recession, which has hit its property, petrolium station and motor distribution businesses. Heron also lost heavily on an ill-timed expansion into America.

A statement from the group

stressed it would repay all its principal and interest in full, and that it was not asking for additional loans. The debts will be repaid by disposals. Trading operations would not be affected, Heron added.

In February, Mr Ronson hired Price Waterhouse, the accountant, to review its finances. Heron is also being advised on the debt reconstruction by UBS Phillips & Drew, the investment bank, and Allen & Overy, the City solicitor.

Heron's problems are the second blow for Barclays within a week. Barclays, a major banker to Olympia & York, is Heron's lead banker and has been discussing the group's problems for several weeks. The bank is thought to have an exposure of more than £100 million to Heron.

National Westminster is said to have a similar amount while Midland has lent about £20 million. Lloyds has also been a lender. Crédit Suisse was the manager of most of the group's £448 million bond issues. Almost all Heron's debt is unsecured.

Heron has wide interests in

import franchise and more than 150 petrol stations.

Heron's last balance sheet shows the extent of its troubles. In the year to end-March 1991, pre-tax profits plunged from £65.3 million to just £2 million. The debts of £1.2 billion compare with net assets of only £585 million.

The figures also included a £66 million provision against discontinued activities in America. Heron is still trying to sell a 48,000-acre development in Arizona, and is winding down its American video distribution business.

Heron is thought to have plunged into losses this year after further decline in the property and motor market. The group could also face heavy writedowns on its assets. Last year, its property interests were valued at £91.5 million and may suffer a writedown due to the collapse in the market.

Heron also valued a 17 per cent stake in Control Securities, the property and leisure group, at £55 million, based on 1990 figures. Control's shares were suspended at 16.5p last year, making the stake worth just £1 million.

Mr Ronson's move to restore Heron's finances met with bankers' approval. Heron telephoned most of its banks before the news to warn them of the position.



In step with bankers: Gerald and Gail Ronson

A time to be cautious and frank

BY OUR BANKING CORRESPONDENT

his part in the Guinness affair.

The establishment has always had a love-hate relationship with Mr Ronson, who treats everyone he meets on his own terms.

At the start of last year, he was still prisoner PK8511 in Ford Open Prison. By July, he was shaking hands with the Queen Mother at the Royal Opera House and showing Princess Diana around the natural history

museum where he is a trustee. The previous month, he had returned to Ford as a visitor at an open day in aid of the Gulf Trust, a charity of which the Ronson Charitable Foundation is believed to be a generous sponsor.

Mr Ronson has reacted to the financial difficulties in his group with characteristic frankness. By taking the initiative to call a meeting with banks and present proposals for a debt reconstruction

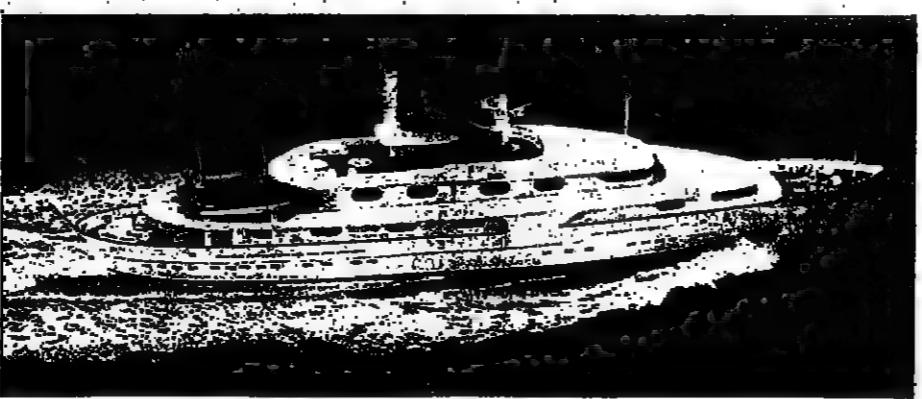
more than a year before the group claims difficulties are likely to emerge, he has strengthened his standing in the City.

He has long commanded respect from City figures. At Ronson's trial, Sir John Quinton, Barclays' chairman, gave him a glowing character reference.

Heron's financial problems will be particularly painful to Mr Ronson as they mean the disposal of one of his most cherished possessions, his luxury motor yacht. At 18ft, My Gail III has been listed as the second largest yacht in Britain, behind the Royal Yacht Britannia, and seven feet longer than Lady Ghislaine, the late Robert Maxwell's yacht.

My Gail III, named after Mr Ronson's wife, is owned by Heron Marine, a subsidiary of the group and has been for sale for more than six months. The asking price is believed to be \$25 million.

In the past, Mr Ronson has been criticised for being too cautious. Ironically, this may now save Heron.



Painful parting: Gerald Ronson is being forced to sell his cherished yacht

O&Y meets to reassure bankers

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON
IN NEW YORK

ROBERT Miller and Thomas Johnson, the new financial team at Olympia & York Developments, were negotiating last night to head off any potential panic among bankers who are owed an estimated C\$20 billion (£10 billion) by the Canadian property giant.

The two - Paul Reichmann, former O&Y president - is understood not to have attended the meeting in Toronto - faced 20 of the conglomerate's principal bankers at the first meeting between the parties since O&Y conceded it faced liquidity problems a week ago.

Those close to the talks said it was crucial that O&Y now establish stability among the lead bankers, and with it an orderly method of sorting out the details of the world's largest but most private property empire, run by the Reichmann

brothers. Leading the banks were Citicorp, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and Hongkong and Shanghai Bank. A European bank is expected to be named today as a member of the steering committee to co-ordinate the banking claims.

The selection is expected to be made from Barclays, Lloyds, Commerzbank, Crédit Lyonnais and Crédit Suisse. One banking source said yesterday: "Banks are always panicky during these kinds of initial negotiations. It is even more difficult here with a company where only a few executives know the whole picture."

Mr Miller and Mr Johnson are due to arrive in London tomorrow night for a similar meeting with European bankers involved in the Canary Wharf project in London's Docklands.

Mr Reichmann will not travel with them; it is understood he is playing a very limited role in negotiations with the

bankers, but remains in Toronto running the O&Y business.

The meetings come amid a reported scramble by the major banks to gain control of more assets to back loans. More than 100 banks are believed to be involved as principals and syndicate banks. Analysts in New York are speculating on a two-tier restructuring programme: an immediate short-term agreement with the banks, which could include delays of interest payments and extensions of mortgages, and a later restructuring that will take account of how many of the smaller banks want to sell their debts at a loss.

The fine tuning of financial engineering is being lead by Mr Miller, who played a key role in the financial rescue of the Chrysler car company. Mr Johnson is a highly respected international banker and a former president of Manufacturers Hanover, the American bank.

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Shell may cut over 4,000 jobs in the North Sea

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SHELL UK, the biggest operator in the North Sea oil province, is to cut its workforce by up to 4,230 over the next decade.

The cutbacks include a reduction of about 3,480 offshore workers, almost 12 per cent of the 30,000-strong offshore workforce in the British sector of the North Sea.

About 750 jobs will be shed from the onshore staff of Shell Exploration and Production in London and Aberdeen — a cut of 25 per cent. Offshore, about 40 per cent of Shell's 7,000 contractors and 1,700 direct employees will no longer be needed.

Shell said the workers would be displaced by better management and technological improvements enabling reduced manning on offshore platforms.

The high operating costs of the North Sea field and weak oil prices have led to strong pressures to contain costs, the company said.

The reductions are expected to be achieved through natural wastage and reduced use of contractors. Shell said it had "no plans for any large-scale redundancies either onshore or offshore".

However, Roger Lyons, general secretary of MSF, the biggest union representing Shell exploration employees, called for urgent talks, and promised to give the union's backing to members "in whatever action they decide to take". Mr Lyons said the company had a duty to keep employees informed of its plans so they could ensure the development of their careers.

He was also worried about the safety implications. "The number of direct Shell employees is already at a very low level," he said. "We are concerned that if these are re-

BHP falls less than expected

FROM REUTER
IN MELBOURNE

RELIEF greeted an 8.6 per cent profit fall at BHP, Australia's largest company. Analysis had expected the drop in the three months to February 29 to be as high as 20 per cent.

Sharply lower oil profits were partly offset by improved steel and mineral earnings.

Net profit for the three months fell to A\$224.2 million (£99 million) with sales down 8 per cent to A\$3.46 billion. Earnings over nine months were down 41.2 per cent to A\$630.9 million. The shares were up 14 cents to A\$13.36.

Third-quarter operating profits before tax rose 27.7 per cent to A\$458.8 million, but the tax bill soared to A\$215.6 million from A\$95.7 million because of non-deductible depreciation and exploration expenditure.

BHP said earnings from petroleum plunged to A\$83 million from A\$196.7 million. The corresponding quarter last year included a period of high oil prices during the Gulf war. Steel sales to the Australian market were up 6 per cent at 706,000 tons. Exports rose 33 per cent to 607,000 tons.

Fish firm will cut 150 jobs

More than 150 people will lose their jobs in Whitehaven, Cumbria, when Dawnfresh Seafoods, a fish processor, closes there at the end of the year.

Mr Alastair Salvesen, the chairman and managing director, said: "We have spent £2 million upgrading our factory here, but this has not been sufficient to meet the demands of the market in terms of quality and hygiene. We have, therefore, decided to close our factory here and relocate in Lanark, Scotland. We will initially be employing 170 people there."

Units knocked

Election nerves meant a quiet month for unit trusts in February. A net outflow of £30 million was the first negative figure since September 1990. During the month, £600 million of units were cashed in and £570 million were bought — a fall of £100 million on January. Funds under management increased by £65 million to £57.8 billion.

Breedon falls

Breedon reports a 39.7 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £2.76 million for the year to end-January. The total dividend is held at 4.6p with an unchanged final of 2.85p.

Dirty takeover battle for Wilkes heads towards conclusion

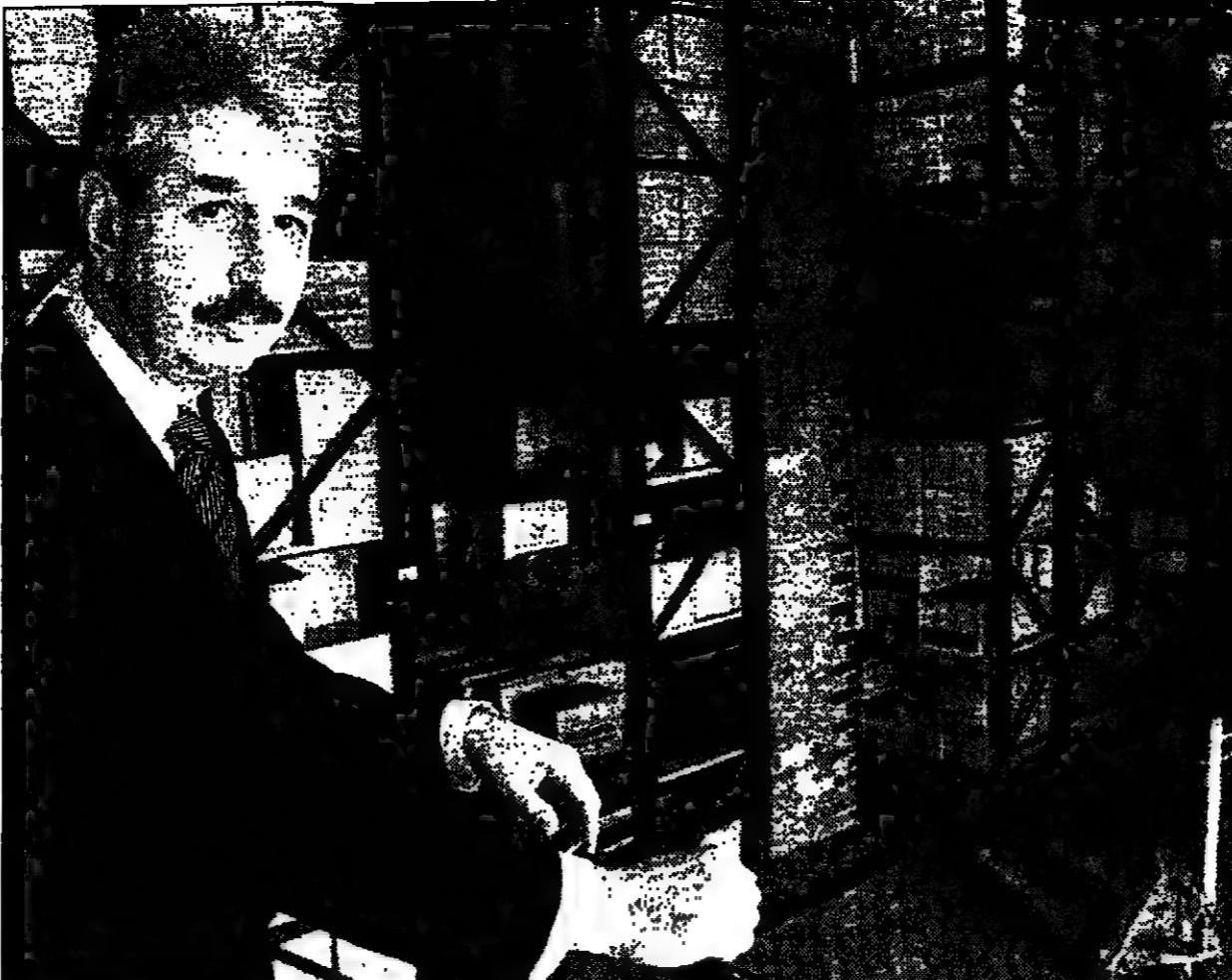
A DIRTY takeover battle comes to an end at 1pm on Monday, by which time shareholders in James Wilkes will have made up their minds whether or not they want Petrocon's paper.

The terms of Petrocon's takeover bid are 13-for-3. With Petrocon trading at 35p yesterday, the offer values each Wilkes share at 151.6p. Meanwhile, in the stock market, Wilkes shares traded at 132p. One reading of this apparent anomaly is that Petrocon will fail, and Wilkes' shares will "fall back" to around 132p.

Neither side can claim this has been a clean battle fought solely on financial criteria. Accusations and criticism of management style have flown in all directions, and the takeover panel has had to rap knuckles. Wilkes, however, has responded to some of the

Election fails to deter British Data

ALAN WELLER



Keeping to schedule: Stephen Crown, of BDM, which will be going public only a week before polling day

Hongkong Bank to seek a dual primary listing

FROM LULU YU IN HONG KONG

THE Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, headed by William Purves, will seek a dual primary listing in London and Hong Kong if its plan to take over Midland Bank succeeds.

The move sparked a controversy, and critics said there would be regulatory problems. Cynics called it a "one company-two exchanges" scenario — a reference to the "one country-two systems" concept that the British and the Chinese have pledged for the colony after 1997.

The banks said in a joint statement that HSBC Holdings, Hongkong Bank's parent company, would be subject to the full regulations

whether granting dual status in this case will create a precedent and lead to a string of similar requests from other companies. The regulations of the two respective securities markets vary on such issues as the takeover code, the approach to suspension of a firm, the publication of public announcements, and the approval of listing applications.

The announcement comes at a time when Jardine Matheson, the largest British group in Hong Kong, has agreed to shift its primary listing in London but to retain a secondary listing in the colony. The group weathered much controversy but reached a compromise with the local exchange and regulatory watchdog.

The proposed new status of the Hongkong Bank is certain to confound Hong Kong's financial community and create difficulties for the regulatory authorities. There is confusion over who will decide which rule is more onerous, and what would happen if the question involved a "yes" or "no" rather than a degree of disclosure. Observers are also wondering

whether granting dual status in this case will create a precedent and lead to a string of similar requests from other companies. The regulations of the two respective securities markets vary on such issues as the takeover code, the approach to suspension of a firm, the publication of public announcements, and the approval of listing applications.

Members of the Hong Kong exchange's listing committee criticised the abruptness of the announcement by HSBC and the lack of consultation on the issue. One member said: "There are many administrative details that have yet to be worked out, and many grey areas."

The banks said: "An understanding in principle has been reached with the stock exchange which will allow HSBC Holdings to maintain its existing primary listing on the Hong Kong exchange and, in addition, for its present listing on the London Stock Exchange to be recognised as a primary listing. The development is conditional upon HSBC's offer for Midland becoming unconditional in all respects."

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Growth of narrow money slows again

BY COLIN NARROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BANK of England figures on notes in circulation point to a renewed slowdown this month in the annual growth rate of M0, the narrow money measure, suggesting continued consumer reluctance to spend.

The weekly data on notes, which form the bulk of M0, showed an annual fall of 2.4 per cent in the week to Wednesday.

City economists said the sharp fall mainly reflected the effect of last year's Budget, which drove consumers out to the shops to beat value-added tax increases. Spending was probably raised at this time last year by the early Easter holiday.

So far this month, however, the weekly figures indicate

that M0 has slowed to an annual growth rate of about 1.2 per cent, excluding the heavily distorted last week. Last week, annual growth was 1 per cent. In February, the annual rate for the month was 2.2 per cent.

Philip Tyson, economist at UBS Phillips & Drew, said M0 growth would probably stay below 2 per cent on a flat trend in the months ahead.

After a stronger than expected 0.4 per cent rise in February, retail sales were now not expected to show any significant pickup for some time, he said.

Simon Briscoe, economist at Midland Montagu, said the notes data were still weak, probably reflecting pre-election nervousness.

Portmeirion boosts its sales in America

BY PHILIP PANGALOS

PORTEMEIRION Pottery (Holdings), the Stoke-on-Trent pottery and decorated ceramic tableware group, suffered a 23.7 per cent decline in profits as the recession took its toll on UK demand.

Pre-tax profits fell from £4.42 million to £2.61 million in the year to end-December. Sales rose 4.8 per cent to £20.4 million, largely due to a favourable exchange rate.

George Hesp, managing director, said early action to control costs and reduce capital expenditure had ensured that the group remained profitable during the difficult climate.

The exception to an otherwise worldwide reduction in demand was America where sales advanced by 23 per cent. The final dividend is

Even so, HTV will be counting on a rise in advertising expenditure after the election for the sums to start making sense.

Net advertising revenue last year fell in real terms by 7.5 per cent to £98.5 million, with HTV's share slipping slightly to 6.2 per cent. The balance sheet has taken a bit of a pounding with £8 million in franchise bid costs, restructuring charges and other provisions taken below the line. A maintained final dividend of 2.25p makes an unchanged 3.75p.

The shares have enjoyed a good run since the franchise win, but the continuing uncertainty in the sector is still in the price. Profits of £8 million would give 7p of earnings, valuing the shares at just nine times this year's earnings. Hold for the 8 per cent yield.

see Petrocon off, and prove itself.

HTV

HTV, the Wales and west England independent TV contractor, has more riding on the election than most. Advertising revenue was particularly depressed this month and only a clear-cut majority thought likely to persuade advertisers to make up their minds.

Petrocon has not yet issued preliminary 1991 results, and says this is because in February it made a detailed trading statement. It says year-end 1991 accounts "would not help Wilkes shareholders to make up their minds".

Wilkes, meanwhile, needs to make an urgent repair to its balance sheet and pay attention to a gearing ratio that rose from 103 per cent to 150 per cent in its 1991 financial year. A reduction to around 60 per cent would be a welcome start.

Lower costs and the more focused management might see Wilkes' pre-tax profits advance this year to between £4.5 million and £5.5 million, to put the shares on a prospective rating of between 7.8 and 6 times.

On balance, Wilkes should be given the chance to retain its independence.

Wilkes can tackle its debt burden effectively in sufficient time to ensure that net earnings per share go forward again.

HTV, the Wales and west England independent TV contractor, has more riding on the election than most. Advertising revenue was particularly depressed this month and only a clear-cut majority thought likely to persuade advertisers to make up their minds.

A hung parliament would make a second election more likely, and with election coverage costing the company about £500,000 in additional programming, that is an expense. HTV could do without. In addition, in its manifesto the Labour party states it would

initiate a monopoly enquiry into ownership of TV companies.

Pre-tax profits of only £441,000 for the year to end-December, down from £4.9 million, do not augur well, whatever the colour of the government, given that the company bid £20.5 million to retain its franchise.

The HTV board, led by Louis Sherwood, sees it differently, arguing that the company, which made almost half its television staff redundant before the bid, is one of the lowest-cost producers and stands to gain when the network scheduling body is deregulated next year. It also points out that once the Channel 4 levy contribution is removed, the company will be paying very little more in its cash bid than it had previously in the form of Exchequer levy.

Earnings dropped to 16.68p a share, down from 23.4p a share last time.

HTV will be counting on a rise in advertising expenditure after the election for the sums to start making sense.

Net advertising revenue last year fell in real terms by 7.5 per cent to £98.5 million, with HTV's share slipping slightly to 6.2 per cent. The balance sheet has taken a bit of a pounding with £8 million in franchise bid costs, restructuring charges and other provisions taken below the line. A maintained final dividend of 2.25p makes an unchanged 3.75p.

The shares have enjoyed a good run since the franchise win, but the continuing uncertainty in the sector is still in the price. Profits of £8 million would give 7p of earnings, valuing the shares at just nine times this year's earnings. Hold for the 8 per cent yield.

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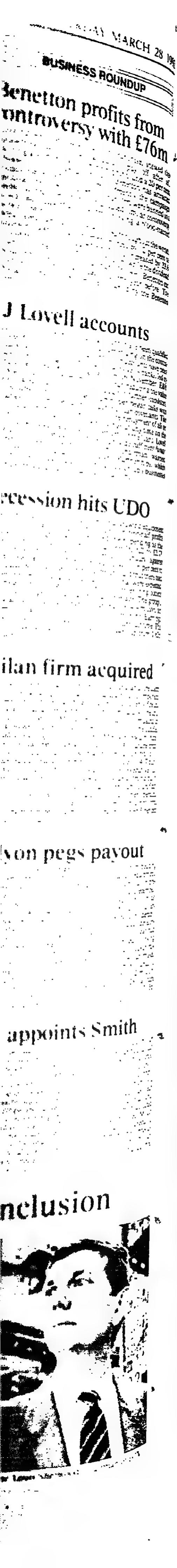
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MARCH 28

1992

100

Benetton profits from controversy with £76m

£100m in 1991. The company has faced criticism over its policies on human rights and the environment. The company has responded by launching a new range of products and services, including a line of organic cotton clothing and a range of environmental products. The company has also announced plans to invest £100m in a new factory in India.

J. Lovell accounts

recession hits UDO

ilan firm acquired

on pegs payout

appoints Smith

inclusion

BUSINESS PROFILE: John Grieves

Marathon man who decides on the run

The senior partner of Freshfields is at the top, but he has never travelled first class, as Carol Leonard finds out

The bodies of people who regularly run long distances seem to go through a profound physiological change. They become long, lean and sinewy, their movements become somehow more angular, as surplus fat disappears, and the skin on their faces takes on a taut and dry appearance.

John Grieves, the senior partner of Freshfields, regarded along with Slaughter & May as one of the best law firms in London, regularly runs 40 miles a week. If he is in training for a marathon – he has completed four so far – it will be considerably more. And he looks the part.

"After running, something does happen to your body," Grieves says. "There is a peculiar chemical change and you get very twitchy and crochety if you don't run for a bit. It's a good time to think, you are totally alone, and I make quite a lot of decisions that way."

Grieves, aged 57, but with a far more youthful gait, also accredits exercise with his high level of energy. He rises at five every morning, averages four hours sleep a night, is always in the office before eight and, before being made senior partner, frequently worked around the clock. "An all-night session here is no big deal. People do it all the time," he says. "But I think being fit helps. You get tired less quickly."

As he speaks, Grieves gesticulates expansively with his hands. His pale blue eyes fix you with a direct gaze, his nose is large and Roman and his face is long and narrow. He smiles readily, has a full, kind mouth and is far from nervous. He might mumble and gloss over specific details when discussing the more intimate aspects of his own personality, but this is caused more by a desire not to sound boastful than a conversational deficiency.

Grieves, who took over the senior partnership of Freshfields from Hugh Peppiatt in May,

'He is not the sort of person who comes in and asks if you have heard the latest Essex girl joke, that is not his style, but he is not prudish'

his role within the firm as more "hands on" than his forerunner's. Far from being old-fashioned, furnished with antiques, Freshfields' Fleet Street offices look more like a film set for LA Law.

"As far as I know, we are the only firm to have done all that," Grieves says. "We have been at the forefront of management among the big law firms. I went to Harvard to learn about managing and finance. But the other thing I found tremendously educating was understanding much more how businessmen thought, their motivations and pressures."

Grieves, although he will normally greet strangers with a frosty "reserve", is "beneath that slightly awkward facade, the sort of sen-



Partners in law: Ann and John Grieves both had to qualify before they were allowed to marry

sitive man who quickly tunes in to other people's thought processes, emotions and reactions. They might not realise it, but he can psyche himself into their mental position with comparative ease.

"I am quite warm when people get to know me, but I suspect that the initial image might not be," he says. "If you talked to my wife, she would immediately say that she was a warm person, whereas I take more time to get to know. Yes, there is a reserve."

Graham Nicholson, Freshfields' managing partner, agrees with Grieves's self-analysis. "On a superficial level you might think that he was a bit of a loner. But that is not right," he says. "There is a good deal of warmth there, but not an unnecessary amount. He is not half-fellow, well-met. He was managing the company department when I qualified into it and I remember finding him pretty daunting at that time. But he is a very compassionate man, very diligent and uniformly fair. He

also has a good sense of humour, he can guffaw on occasions, but in business it is kept under control. He is not the sort of person who comes in and asks if you have heard the latest Essex girl joke, that is not his style, but he is not prudish either."

Control is a word that springs to mind frequently with regard to Grieves. He explains that his sense of humour has to be controlled because it is often misunderstood. "I value a sense of humour very highly, and mine is quite dry," he says. "I quite like the understated and that is not always the right style for a senior partner. It does get misunderstood."

His temper is similarly kept under control. Nicholson has only seen him lose it once. "Someone had called into question his good faith when it was unjustified," he recalls. "It was a controlled loss of temper but it was ferocious, nevertheless, and it had a salutary effect on the person concerned."

Grieves, who admits that he can

shed tears listening to Elgar's violin concerto, also talks about the need to control emotion in professional life. "You do get churned up by things, of course you do, but I would not show it. I'm a great believer in being professional and I think part of that is controlling yourself."

Another key facet of Grieves's make-up is religion, arguably a further form of restraint. A committed Christian, he goes to church every Sunday and helps to transport elderly parishioners once a month. "Yes it is important to me. My parents were Methodists and I was a Methodist to start with, but while I was up at Oxford I became more attracted to the Church of England service and I was confirmed while I was there. He was then 23. It was largely because of his religious beliefs that he lived at home with his parents until he married Ann. "It was for religious and moral reasons," he says. Does he disapprove of co-habiting, then? "I'm not pre-

senior partner of the firm before him, as well as president of the Law Society, and his uncle was chief cashier to the Bank of England. Grieves, in contrast, was a father who had been a town planning officer in Worcester, was a day boy at a nearby private school – King's – lived in a semi-detached house and began his legal career with a provincial firm. He has, however, no trace of a regional accent.

"I had progressively felt the need to come to London, it was where all the most interesting work was going on, and when Pinsent & Co offered me a partnership I knew I had to make up my mind," he says. "I can remember thinking, way back, who on earth would want to do that? My professional ambition has always been to have a successful practice."

In contrast to Freshfields' establishment image, Grieves admits that he is more attracted to people who are "frank and disarming. People who aren't built up. No, I don't like stuffy people. I like people who can enjoy life and are fun." He uses the word "frankly" often. Despite his salary, well into six figures, Grieves says he is not motivated by money alone. "I wouldn't go anywhere just because someone offered me more money, it would have to be the right job."

Nor is he ostentatious. He drives a Saab 900 Turbo and owns just one house, bought 20 years ago. He has never flown first class, even on business, and for family holidays they always travel "at the back of the plane". His wife summarises him well. "He has an extraordinary Christian faith, an absolutely iron will power and he is like Blackpool rock – if you slice him open you'll find Freshfields stamped all the way through. There is a steel strip in all successful men, they have got to have it right from the word go. But some of them burn out along the way. John was fortunate in that he was never pushed – he has been able to drive himself, at his own pace, every step of the way."

WEEK ENDING Matthew Bond

Avoiding the whirlpool in a ship of the desert

IN THE matter of import and export we, as a nation, have long been champions of the imbalance of trade, almost invariably at our own expense.

February, we now learn, was a particularly fine example of this tradition, showing that even in the darkest hour of deepest recession we still managed to import £1 billion more than we sold to the rest of the world. The stock market duly celebrated in a traditional manner by falling almost 25 points until being partially revived by a whiff of that most exotic of price-sensitive scents, the opinion polls that actually show the Conservatives ahead.

Established is this pattern, that City economists have become well-practised in their explanations as to why the trade figures can safely be ignored. One of their favourites is to pass the blame on to the poor statisticians who collate such figures, pointing out that if all the deficits and surpluses from the countries of the world are added up, the answer is not the equilibrium that theory would suggest, but a thumping deficit for the entire world.

At this point economists tend to fall about laughing, pointing out the absurdity of this apparent aberration and what a good thing it is there are economists around to explain away such things. But recently the chuckles have fallen rather quiet.

For more and more events would suggest an alternative and economically awesome explanation. Could it be that the statisticians have been right all along? Could there really be some sort of vast financial "black hole" that is silently and relentlessly sucking up the world's wealth? Could the mythical Charybdis of economic catastrophe theory be fact?

Preposterous I hear you say. But think again. It certainly provides a very plausible explanation for much of what is currently going on.

The events of the week

would suggest that some unseen hand has just turned Charybdis on to full power, with the result that wealth is now disappearing at an unprecedented rate.

First, there were the Reichmanns, the Canadian brothers responsible for Canary Wharf, in London's Dockland, and the owners of millions of square feet of office space in Canada and America. For years the words "mugely wealthy" have been compulsory precursors to any mention of their name.

With Charybdis gathering strength, few aspects of the global financial system were left unaffected. The Tokyo stock market fell to a new five-year low; gold confirmed to explore price levels it had not seen for six years and *Punch* announced that it had breathed its last. Was there nothing that could be depended upon? Was there no wealth to be found?

Well of course there was. It was just a question of knowing where to look. The chairman's office of recently privatised industries is always a good place to start, particularly at moments of political sensitivity. Bang on electoral cue, Robert Evans, chairman of British Gas, unveiled a £1,252 a week pay rise taking his 1991 salary to £435,222, including an £84,500 bonus presumably linked to the company's splendid performance in the ultra competitive gas supply market.

But full marks for inventiveness, go, as ever, to Lorraine's Tiny Rowland, whose search for some way to reduce debts of over £1 billion came to a £177 million successful conclusion somewhere deep in the Libyan desert. With Charybdis beckoning, a case of being caught between the desert and the deep blue sea?

But then the sirens got to work.

Rumour turned to restructuring in a flash. Estimates of the debts owed by the family firm Olympia & York, rose seemingly on a daily basis – £5 billion, £10 billion, £20 billion – but then when you're past the first billion who's counting or, in the case of secretive O&Y, who's guessing?

But the sirens were far from satisfied. Within hours, it became clear that the mighty Getty Trust, at least its museum part, was running out of money to continue its massive art buying spree.

If the Reichmanns and the Getty trustees were having trouble resisting the call, what chance had lesser mor-

Cadbury still prepared to buy

FROM REUTER
IN TORONTO

CADBURY Schweppes has said it is still interested in any acquisition opportunities that might arise. The company last week announced it had agreed to buy Femsa Agua Minerales, a Mexican mineral water company, for £188 million.

David Jinks, group financial director, told a meeting of the Toronto society of financial analysts that the company believed the Mexican venture would "definitely" increase revenues. He said further acquisitions were probable, despite pressure from the recession in Britain. Mr Jinks added that it was too early to make revenue predictions for 1992. He said: "The recession is still there. We do not see any improvement in the economic climate in the UK, Europe or Australia."

The company said the Mexican market was an important strategic target because it is the second largest soft drinks market in the world. Its citizens consume 130 litres of carbonated beverage a year per capita.

Femsa Agua Minerales, the leading mineral water company in the country, commands a 68 per cent share of the mineral water market. The acquisition would bump Schweppes' share of the soft drinks market to 5.7 per cent from 1.8 per cent.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Financial experts have been getting to grips with the implications of a possible Labour victory. The shadow budget has prompted a list of suggestions on actions to take, especially by high earners, including taking part of next year's income now.

How to beat the Labour budget – Business, The Sunday Times tomorrow

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Executives of Nikko sued over loss cover

FROM REUTER
IN TOKYO

TWO Nikko Securities shareholders are taking legal action in pursuit of a demand that executives should reimburse the firm for millions of dollars that were paid to favoured clients as compensation for investment losses.

Iwane Asai, a lawyer and one of the two shareholders, said the action sought to force the executives to reimburse Nikko some Y47 billion (£204 million) for compensation made between January 1990 and March 31, 1991.

A Nikko spokesman said 12 executives and four former executives were targeted by the action.

Among those cited in the suit are Takuji Iwasaki, the former president of the company, who resigned last June over the compensation scandals. He is now vice president but has been deprived of voting rights.

The suit, lodged in Tokyo District Court, alleges that the compensation violated the Securities and Exchange Act, the anti-monopoly law and a 1989 finance ministry directive.

It thus constituted breach of trust on the part of the executives and former executives, Mr Asai said.

Nikko, with other top Japanese broking houses, last year admitted improperly compensating clients for investment losses.

Last compensation made after December 1989 violated a finance ministry directive. Until a revision of the Securities and Exchange Act, however, promising to cover losses was banned but compensating people after they had been incurred was not.

Japan's fair trade commission said Nikko and the other "big four" securities houses — Nomura Securities, Daiwa Securities and Yamaichi Securities — had violated the anti-monopoly law by improperly using compensation to attract customers.

The commission said Nikko compensated clients for losses totalling Y56.58 billion between October 1987 and the end of March, 1991.

Chill political wind blows shares and bonds lower

SHARE prices and bonds fell sharply as market-makers were forced to contend with a steady trickle of gloomy political and economic news.

A shudder went through the Square Mile as word went round that an opinion poll being conducted for London Weekend Television gave Labour a clear lead over the Conservatives. The poll said to indicate that Labour was poised to capture most of London's marginal seats.

The Bundesbank appeared to scupper any remaining hopes of a cut in UK interest rates by stating that German interest rates were unlikely to fall before the end of the year.

Fund managers' reluctance to open new positions before the weekend left the equity market looking forlorn. The FT-SE 100 index managed to close above its worst of 24.3 to 2447.9. It had been more than 30 points down just before the close.

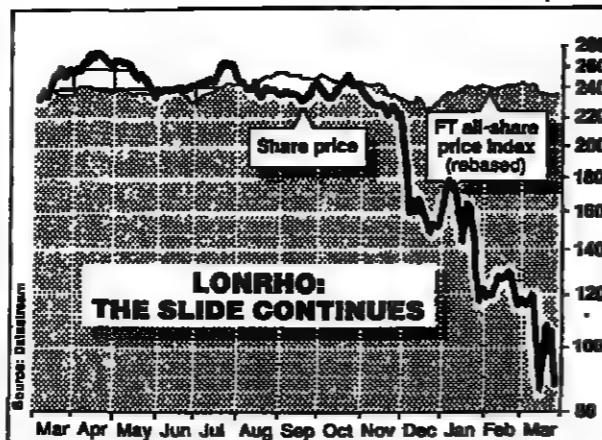
Government securities suffered further losses of £1 at the longer end because of concern over interest rates. Dealers are worried that a Labour victory could cause a run on sterling and create upward pressure on base rates.

The banks spent a worrying day on learning that Gerald Ronson's private business empire, Heron International, was in urgent talks with its bankers about rescheduling its £1.2 billion debt burden.

Barclays is reckoned to be the bank with the biggest exposure to Heron and responded to the news with a fall of 13p to 322p. There were also setbacks for Lloyds, 2p to 387p, National Westminster, 7p to 280p, The Royal Bank of Scotland, 10p to 164p and Standard Chartered, 2p to 440p. Abbey National was also weak, losing 7p to 269p.

Pearson fell 10p to 786p ahead of full-year figures on Monday. Lucas Industries also reported next week, lost 6p to 119p. Rothmans "B" fell 31p to £10.08 in anticipation of a full-year figure on Tuesday.

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Source: Bernstein

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Fund managers and ana-

lysts continued to reflect long and hard on the latest device of Lomiro for reducing its £1 billion of debt. The share price fell 8p to 87p. On Thursday, the group announced that it had sold a

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Large increases in household insurance premiums are forcing substantial numbers of people to change insurance companies, or at least to obtain some quotes to reassure themselves that they are not being ripped off too badly.

Such telephone quotes are compared, and the best value policy from a well-known company is often chosen. How much faith can be put in such quotes should be in direct proportion to the stature of the organisation. But that no longer appears to be the case.

A reader, who felt his home insurance at £500 was too high, obtained several quotes, including one from the National Westminster, his bank. The NatWest came up with the cheapest quote. As it had always given the customer good service, he agreed to the premium of £403.40 and sent off a cheque.

This week, a letter arrived stating that cover had started on March 18. It then went on to apologise to the customer, saying

that he was misquoted at the time of the telephone call and could therefore forward an additional premium of £152.60 so that the policy could be issued. This makes the cover more expensive than it would have been with his original insurer, and the customer now wishes that he had stayed put.

He also feels trapped in the higher premium. The cover offered by NatWest is already running. To change to another company would be messy and could involve the reader being out of pocket for a long time after he pays a premium to another company and waits for a refund from the bank.

When asked, NatWest could not say immediately if the customer was always made to pay when its insurance subsidiary gave a wrong quote over the telephone, which resulted in the bank obtaining business that it

otherwise would not have done. Yesterday, the bank finally said the letter had been a mistake and the customer will not have to pay more.

Should it happen to other customers, the bank's staff should only have to look at last year's insurance ombudsman's report for guidance on who pays for mistakes. He ruled that companies must take the consequences of mistakes their staff make. If a low premium is quoted in error, then the company must stand the loss. In one case, a company had quoted £25 a month

when the premium should have been £95. In another, the policy schedule showed a monthly benefit when it should have been annual, while in a third, the policy was described as "with profits" when it should have said "without profits".

If the company had spotted the error before the customer was able to send off his cheque, then it could legitimately ask for more. But once someone feels trapped in a 12-month policy, it is not playing fair.

Any insurance company or bank that told a customer of such

a mistake, but said it was not going to penalise the customer, should have a policyholder for life.

Clear winner

The case for full cash disclosure of commissions and charges received a boost this week when a City debate was won by the team proposing that disclosure would lead to a better market for investors.

Jean Eagleham, of the Consumers' Association, and Dr Keith Bradley, of the London School of Economics, were the victors. The opposition came from independent financial advisers and an insurance company.

In May, the Securities and Investments Board plans to make new rules that will confirm its view that investors should not be given full disclosure at the point of sale.

In the weeks that follow, before the departure from the board of Sir David Walker for Lloyds Bank and of Sir Gordon Bonie from the Office of Fair Trading, investors can only hope that common sense will prevail.

The OFT, which has long campaigned for full disclosure, will not enter the battle until the rules are made. It will then assess whether the rules are anti-competitive and fair to investors.

It was Sir Gordon's belief that full disclosure of commission in cash terms should be given to investors, so that they could compare whether a broker was unduly influenced by commission, that set the review of disclosure of commissions by the board under way.

The trade department also has to be satisfied that the interests of consumers are being well served by the information they are given. Any minister, of whatever political complexion, is more likely to think of the interests of the voting consumers ahead of those of the large insurance companies if his party has a tiny majority.

Ombudsmen have had a busy year. Lindsay Cook looks at their role in settling disputes about financial services

CUSTOMER complaints are swamping the financial ombudsmen in the wake of increased charges, falling house prices, higher premiums, poor stock market performance and recessionary pressures on companies.

This week, Dr Julian Farrand, the insurance ombudsman, said that his office handled more than 40,000 enquiries last year, and that number was rising. The bureau dealt with 4,334 new cases, and in addition received 13,899 written enquiries and another 26,048 by telephone.

Stephen Edell and Jane Woodhead, the building societies ombudsmen, expect the number of complaints to have doubled during the current year, which ends on Tuesday.

In 1990, the office reported that it had made rulings on 50 per cent more cases than the previous year. The tripling of the office's workload in its first four years forced the appointment of Mrs Woodhead as the second ombudsman. This year, obsolete accounts have topped the complaints list. Since the ombudsman ruled in January that the Nationwide Building Society should pay compensation to an investor who was not told of a better rate of interest being offered by a new account, the office has received a large increase in complaints about old accounts.

Banks attracted an increase of 62 per cent in the number of complaints to 6,327 in the year to the end of September, forcing the office to advertise for extra staff. Laurence Shurman, the banking ombudsman, said complaints about charges and interest rates accounted for one in six of the total.

Michael Barnes, the legal services ombudsman, will produce his first annual report in May. This will cover the year to December 31. He inherited 600 cases from the law ombudsman and has received many more of his own. Two thirds of complaints were about poor service. The largest area of complaint was house sale and purchase, followed by divorce, property disputes and wills. Mr Barnes makes recommendations. If a firm refuses to pay, Mr Barnes can require it to place an advertisement explaining the recommendation and its decision. The building societies ombudsman can also require societies to advertise in specified newspapers if they do not agree to an award.

The ombudsman schemes all require customers to ex-

Complaints swamp the City peace makers

haust the internal complaints procedures before they are passed on for impartial examination. Because of this, the complaints that go on to the ombudsman's office are a small proportion of the total.

The banking, building societies and insurance ombudsmen all find for customers in a third of cases and support the financial organisations in two thirds of cases.

Only Richard Youard, the investment referee, has seen a fall in the number of cases handled. His year also ends on Tuesday and his office says it expects to see a slight reduction in its caseload. It deals with complaints about members of the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation. Most involve complaints about portfolio management. In 1990 he handled 134 cases and awarded £85,000.

David Quayle, the ombudsman for corporate estate



Simple system: Jane Woodhead, ombudsman

per case, although they can recommend higher payouts.

Dr Farrand recommended one person should receive £55,000 per year, in the case of a woman who had died eight years after taking out term insurance. The company at first suspected she was not dead, but paid out on Dr Farrand's recommendation. In total he recommended £5 million payouts.

The insurance ombudsman was the first to be set up in 1981, when leading insurance companies started the scheme. They had hoped that it would show there was no need for an ombudsman, and could be disbanded after two years. Instead it has provided the model for a growing number of schemes.

Address: The Insurance Ombudsman Bureau, City Gate One, 135 Park Street, London SE1 9EA; The Office of the Banking Ombudsman, Citadel House, 5/11 Fener Lane, London EC4A 1BR; The Office of the Building Societies Ombudsman, 35-37 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1X 7AW; The Ombudsman for Corporate Estate Agents, PO Box 1114, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 1YQ; Pensions Ombudsman, 11 Belgrave Road, London SW1V 1RB; Investment Referee, 6 Frederick Place, London EC2R 8BT.



Salesmen put on the spot

DISPUTES over sales pitch are being examined by the insurance ombudsman at informal hearings in an attempt to determine what salesmen have actually said in selling a policy.

Last year, 38 out of a total of 45 hearings involved disputes over life policies, and 18 resulted in Dr Julian Farrand making awards for the claimants.

Most involved tied and appointed representatives of life companies, and the number is expected to double this year as complaints about this sector increase. In 1991, 809 of the 2,839 cases resolved by the ombudsman involved life insurance. This compared with 510 in 1990.

The hearings speed up cases allowing factual disputes about the point of sale to be explored in two hours rather than in a series of letters.

In one case, the ombudsman found for an investor who was sold a unit-linked whole life policy at the age of 18 when he wanted a savings plan. When, at the age of 21, he asked for his money back, he found there was no surrender value.

The financial planner completed before the sale had indicated savings for

"nice house, nice holidays". The sales man told the ombudsman's bureau that he had explained the nature of the policy, which was called a financial security account plan, and that the customer was happy. He later admitted that at the time of the sale he had been trained on only two products and had not therefore recommended a more appropriate capital accumulation plan.

Dr Farrand said the most common complaint at informal hearings and in letters from dissatisfied investors was: "I was told that it was the same as a building society account, only better."

He has already handled several cases involving with-profits bonds wrongly sold as short-term investments. Last week, the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation ordered life companies selling these bonds to submit all marketing material so that it could check that investors were not being misled about them.

When an independent intermediary signed surrender forms for policyholders without their permission, and the insurance company paid out on the strength of the fraudulent signatures, the true policyholders had to take their claims to the ombudsman. The com-

pany argued that acting upon "apparently genuine signatures was neither negligent nor inconsistent with good insurance practice". The policies, therefore, had to be reinstated.

Another case involved a fraudulent intermediary who forged schedules connected to a real policy to convince an investor that he had put thousands of pounds into an investment bond on his behalf. Dr Farrand recommended a compromise solution. He thought that the insurance company and the investor should share the loss equally. In other words, the company should pay half the missing money. Dr Farrand made a non-binding recommendation, and although "far from comfortable" the life company made ex gratia payments to the investor and several others.

Complaints about life policies were resolved in favour of the policyholders more frequently than for general insurance claims. The average overall was a 32 per cent success rate for customers.

Six companies had 100 or more complaints against them dealt with by the ombudsman. The largest number against one company was 205, but the ombudsman found in favour of only a total of 33 of the policyholders.

Valuations fair game

A HIGH Court ruling against four building societies should give some homebuyers the right to take complaints about valuations to the building societies ombudsman.

Mr Justice Morritt ruled against the Halifax, the Woolwich, the Leeds Permanent and the Alliance & Leicester building societies in a friendly action between them and the ombudsman's office representing eight homebuyers.

The societies will soon decide whether to appeal against the decision that would open the way for the ombudsman's office to deal with valuation complaints for the first time in its five-year history.

The ruling will only help homebuyers who are existing borrowers of a society when a staff valuer carries out the valuation of a property. Valuations have accounted for a substantial number of the complaints to the ombudsman, but until now the office has not been able to handle them.

The first victory for a homebuyer who relied solely on a valuation was in the Yianni case in 1981. Since then there have been a few more, but the cost puts most people off.

Now a simple, quick and free adjudication system should be available to some borrowers who feel that major defects were missed, or that

wrong valuations have caused problems with buildings insurance, or other difficulties.

Mr Justice Morritt said that the Building Societies Act 1986 gave an individual the right to have a complaint investigated by the ombudsman.

However, the ruling would still leave new customers of a society and those of societies who rely totally on the building societies' valuation and for those who use building society surveyors for the more expensive reports to sue the society or valuer. Where severe loss had occurred, some buyers have taken this action and had to wait years for the outcome of their cases.

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The Building Societies Association has been in talks with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors to urge it to set up an ombudsman's scheme for valuers. This could then cover all valuations, housebuyer's reports and structural surveys.

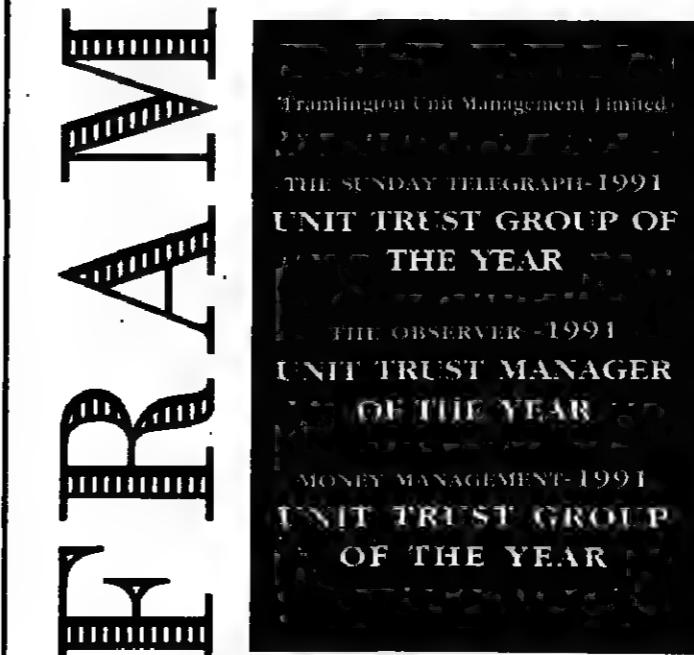
Last year the ombudsman added banking services, trusteeships and executors to the cases that could be dealt with. When the office was being set up in 1987, none of the building societies offered bank accounts.

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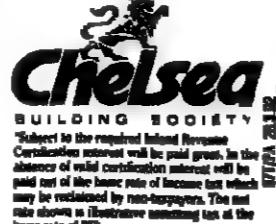
Address _____

Postcode _____ Tel. _____

Signed (1) _____

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Please only enclose cheques which should be made payable to the Chelsea Building Society (bounced by the name(s) of the person(s) opening the account).



Co-op sets pace with anti-fraud cheques

By LIZ DOLAN

THE Co-operative Bank has become the first high street bank to respond to new legislation designed to prevent 'cheque fraud'. From next month, all Co-op customers will receive special cheque books in which every cheque will be crossed 'Account Payee' as standard. In addition, the words 'or order' on the payee line have been replaced by 'only'.

This wording rules out people receiving cheques and then cashing them through someone else's account by signing the back. This device has been used by people without bank accounts, but has also caused problems with the fraudulent cashing of cheques.

By mid-summer, standard cheques sent to Lloyds' customers will also carry the words 'account payee' and 'only'. However, old-style cheque books will continue to be available on request for people who still wish to allow third-party endorsement.

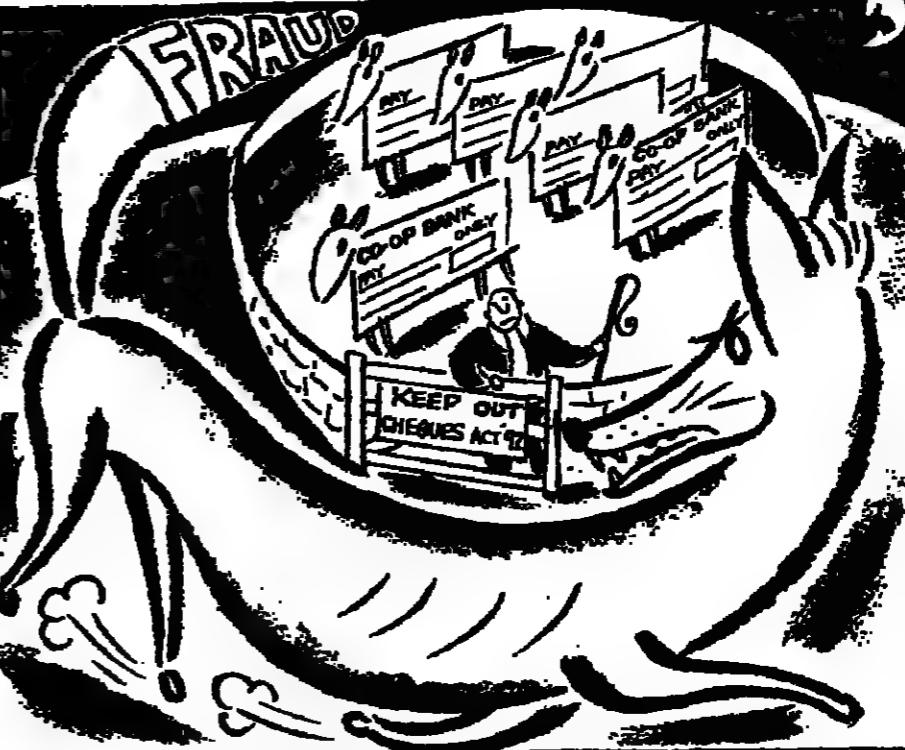
The 1992 Cheque Act, which was rushed through

Parliament on the last day of the recent session, gives legal status to both phrases, although it says the word 'only' should suffice.

Barclays said: 'We welcome the act and will definitely be offering customers 'account payee' cheques. We don't quite know when, because we're undecided about exactly how to do it. Do we offer a straight choice, make one option available only on request, or send everyone cheques with the new wording on them? For some people it will be very inconvenient if cheques cannot be endorsed to third parties.'

Customers were already being encouraged to write 'account payee' manually on cheques, a spokeswoman said. The new cheques would be available in three or four months, she added.

National Westminster said it was sending guidelines to branches on how to advise customers, but it had not yet decided what to do about the wording on cheques. A spokesman said: 'We are



conscious that some of our customers want third party endorsement facilities.'

He said that NatWest would have made a final decision and communicated it to all customers well before June 16, when the act comes into force.

NatWest was 'right behind' the act, he added, because it clarified the legal position about cheque wording. 'It used to be Sunday trading, where no one really knew what the law was.'

The Royal Bank of Scotland said new-style cheques would certainly be available at some point, but 'we are still looking at a wide range of scenarios and working out the best policy. There would

be a few difficulties if we abolished the present style of cheque. For instance, when my children receive cheques, they have to pay them into my account.'

The Co-op's new cheques will also carry intricate lines and a complex mix of security inks intended to make life difficult for forgers.

Last year, £2 million was lost by people whose cheques were stolen in the post and subsequently fraudulently endorsed to a third party, according to Derek Harper, manager of the British Banking Association's fraud intelligence unit. The unit was set up a year ago in response to a series of cheque frauds in the previous year, involving the tame publican.'

Fixed-rate deals still available at under 10%

By SARA McCONNELL

FIXED-rate mortgage deals edged below 10 per cent again this week, with several fixed terms of ten years on offer.

This follows announcements last week by several lenders, including the Halifax and Abbey National, that they were withdrawing lower fixed rates and reselling of-

fers at higher rates, nudging 11 per cent.

John Charcol, the mortgage broker, is offering a rate of 9.95 per cent (an annual percentage rate of 12 per cent fixed for ten years). The broker says that funds are being provided by a top-ten building society.

Funds at the fixed rate will be offered for mortgages and remortgages on repayment, pension and endowment or on an interest-only basis. There is a redemption penalty of three months' interest during the fixed-rate term, and a lender's fee of 0.75 per cent.

Offering a fixed rate of 9.95 per cent (APR 12 per cent for ten years) is Miers Mortgage & Insurance Services, the Shipley, West Yorkshire, broker. It is available for mortgages and remortgages, as a repayment or interest-only mortgage. There is an arrangement fee of 1 per cent.

Equity & Law Home Loans has launched a ten-year fixed-rate mortgage at 9.95 per cent (APR 10.5 per cent) as part of its premier mortgage range. Those who cannot show proof of income will pay 10.95 per cent (APR 11.7 per cent) and will only be lent up to 60 per cent of the property's value.

Above the 10 per cent mark, Cheltenham & Gloucester is offering a rate of 10.6 per cent (APR 11.4 per cent) fixed for five years. The society has pledged that it will guarantee a mortgage offer by April 9, polling day, to anyone who gets an application in by April 1.

The election has also prompted an offer of an 'election-proof' cap and collar mortgage from the Leeds Permanent. The two-year deal has an initial capped rate of 10.75 per cent (APR 12 per cent) but guarantees to follow any basic rate cuts down to 9.75 per cent.

Liberation switches from bras to brass

By ANNE CABORN

WOMEN may have burned their bras back in the Sixties, but it has taken 30 years for them to get their hands on the financial trousers traditionally worn by the men in their lives.

The day-to-day family financial budget has always been mainly organised by women. In fact, the less money available, the more likely the woman was to hold the purse strings.

But recent research shows them having more say on a broad range of money matters. According to the Henley Centre for Forecasting, a significant number of female partners are taking responsibility for matters such as insurance and mortgages. A high proportion shares the decision-making.

Some 66 per cent of the women interviewed claimed joint responsibility for arranging life insurance and 18 per cent claimed sole responsibility. Sixty per cent said they were jointly responsible for home and contents insurance — 17 per cent were solely responsible — and 34 per cent played a part in decision-making when it came to the ultimate male bastion, insuring the car. Sole responsibility was claimed by 21 per cent.

The areas where fewest women had sole responsibility was organising the mortgage, only 5 per cent, but 75 per cent shared responsibility. Peter Mills, Henley financial services expert, pointed out that even those areas where women appeared to have the least say showed a marked improvement over the traditional picture.

Mintel, the market research analyst, is another organisation that has picked up on the financial revolution. Its report on *Women and Finance*, published late last year, devised an 'influence index' to indicate how much say women had in a couple's choice of financial products.

kept on going on that they wanted to be 'together' while the women was all for running off and taking a yacht around the world. It's certainly a move away from the idyllic couple."

The adult male market had also reached saturation point. "All men have been contacted at one time or another by at least one financial services organisation," Mr Mills says.

"They need to augment existing business. Traditionally they've looked at younger adults, particularly in terms of things like the current account market."

However, the number of young adults is set to decline. In 1991 there were 4.5 million adults aged 20 to 24. By 1999, this is expected to drop to 3.4 million.

By contrast, women are taking a greater role in the job market and are working their way further up the career ladder. By 1994-5 half of all graduates should be women which will lead, in the longer term, to a better balance between men and women in management.

Significant numbers of women work in service industries which tend to have smaller work units such as a restaurant with a dozen employees, as opposed to a factory employing hundreds or even thousands, which in turn allows women to become bigger fish in smaller ponds.

A woman in that sort of job is going to have her own perceptions about her ability to make decisions, and this will spill over from the workplace," Mr Mills says.

Women also seemed to have the edge when it came to making financial decisions without their partners realising they have done so. When the Henley Centre asked female partners if they shared responsibility for arranging life insurance, 66 per cent said they did. But when the male halves of couples were asked the same question, only 48 per cent said the decision was shared.

This difference of opinion was also present in other areas of financial planning.

"Some men may not even realise they are no longer solely responsible for financial decision-making — or they may simply choose not to admit it," Mr Mills says.

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The indexed rate for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in February 1992.					
Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
January	—	0.650	0.569	0.494	0.416
February	—	0.643	0.563	0.483	0.411
March	0.716	0.640	0.558	0.469	0.395
April	0.692	0.617	0.536	0.438	0.366
May	0.670	0.610	0.532	0.432	0.383
June	0.655	0.607	0.528	0.429	0.394
July	0.635	0.598	0.530	0.431	0.398
August	0.624	0.591	0.516	0.427	0.393
September	0.605	0.584	0.513	0.428	0.387
October	0.587	0.578	0.503	0.426	0.384
November	0.649	0.573	0.499	0.421	0.373
December	0.652	0.569	0.500	0.419	0.388
1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
		0.319	0.228	0.141	0.047
		0.314	0.219	0.134	0.041
		0.309	0.214	0.125	0.037
		0.288	0.192	0.080	0.024
		0.263	0.185	0.080	0.021
		0.279	0.181	0.076	0.016
		0.277	0.180	0.075	0.019
		0.263	0.177	0.064	0.016
		0.257	0.169	0.054	0.013
		0.245	0.160	0.046	0.009
		0.239	0.150	0.048	0.005
		0.236	0.147	0.040	0.004

The RI month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

**SUCCESSION
INVESTMENT
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Ernie hangs on to the secret of a sure win

BY SARA MCCONNELL

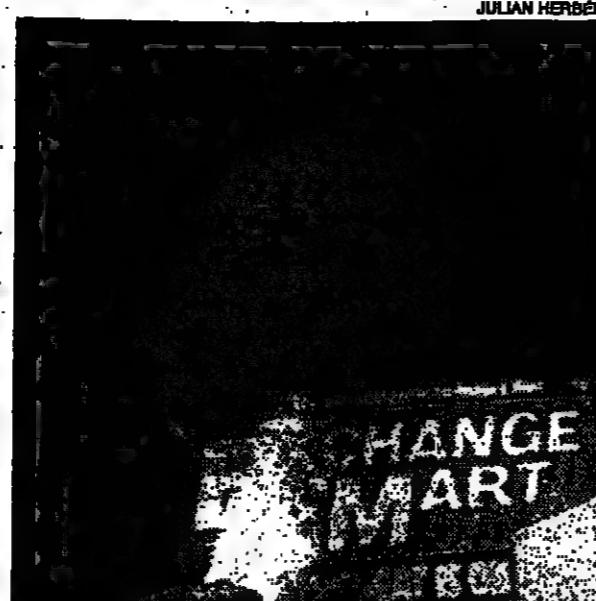
FORGET The Lost Ark of the Covenant, the Turin Shroud and the last moments of the Romanovs. The great mystery of our time is "How to win the Premium Bonds". Frustrated bondholders feel that there must be a scientific way of working out a fool-proof winning strategy. Assurances from National Savings that premium bond numbers are randomly generated and that every bond has an equal chance of winning are treated with dark suspicion.

So advertisements like the one that appeared regularly in *Exchange and Mart* at the end of last year — "Can I help you win the premium bonds?" — are a secret. For details, KJ Ellis' "appear to offer the key to scientifically generated numbers."

Those sending off a stamped addressed envelope will receive a typewritten sheet from Mr Ellis who promises: "In my book *Can I help you win the premium bonds?* you will learn that if you hold bonds you may already have won and not know it! that you do not need to hold anywhere near the maximum number to get good odds of [sic] winning that one day's difference when purchasing may make all the difference!"

Unfortunately for Mr Ellis and any eager disciples, National Savings dismisses Mr Ellis's analysis of the premium bond scheme as "simplistic and partial". It goes on: "With randomly generated numbers you cannot apply this calculation to an individual holding and expect it to work."

"We cannot endorse the



'Misled': Richard Kidd registered complaint

recommendations in this booklet."

Mr Ellis said his method was one theory. He has won 23 times over the past three to five years using his system, bringing him more than £1,000. He does not claim that he has found a way to beat the random system. The secret of Mr Ellis's method is only revealed to those sending him £12 for the complete book, which is typewritten and home-bound. The book says the chances of winning will be enhanced by buying an optimum holding".

National Savings said that even those who invest the maximum £10,000 in bonds could spend years waiting to win the maximum £250,000 monthly prize but the chance against winning no monthly prize at all in a year is 55,000 to one. The prizes, though, are more likely to be of £50 or

prize fund on a holding of 1,700 bonds would be a prize of £50 a month, statistically the most likely prize to win. This will disappoint readers who were hoping to have the secrets of winning the £250,000 prize explained.

Encouraging people to buy fewer premium bonds might not please National Savings. But the advertisement in *Exchange and Mart* also attracted the attention of Richard Kidd, of Andover, Hampshire, who considered it to be misleading because it implied to him that there was a way of beating the random number selection process of premium bonds.

After being told that the advertisement was not covered by the Advertising Standards Authority's terms of reference, Mr Kidd referred the advertisement to his local trading standards office in Basingstoke.

Chris Smith, assistant county trading standards officer, Hampshire, said the complaint was still under investigation. However, the original advertisement did not appear to contravene existing trading standards legislation, he said. Much of the information in Mr Ellis's book was already public knowledge or contained in National Savings' own literature, so people should ask whether it was worth paying £12 for the book, he added.

"The standard advice we would give to people in these cases is 'Do not put your money unless you are prepared to lose it'. If you do send money, carry out checks on people first." In Mr Ellis's case this could be difficult as he is ex-directory and none of his literature carried a telephone or fax number.

ECU offers a home loan hedge

BY SARA MCCONNELL

FOREIGN currency mortgage holders whose funds are managed by ECU Group received a letter this week offering them the option of taking out currency futures contracts to protect them against any sudden drop in the value of the pound after the election.

Borrowers choosing the futures contract option will have to put up deposits of 10 per cent of their loans. If the pound moves up against the currency in which the futures are held, borrowers could stand to lose their whole deposit. Some clients might be asked for more money to cover losses.

The availability of the futures contract is a one-off during the period of uncertainty before and after the election, the group said.

Client funds have been held in Swiss francs since

February and will, for the most part, continue to be, the group said. However, borrowers who want to avoid exposure to falls in the pound's value that would increase the size of their loans are being told to move their money into sterling temporarily until the election is over.

It tells its 700 clients that the alternative, "and in our opinion, the more favourable option" is to create an exposure in currencies which are trending up against the pound and which are likely, therefore, to benefit more from a sudden decline in the pound's fortunes. This exposure can be created for you via the derivative markets on the international monetary market through our sister company, ECU Futures plc."

Michael Petley, ECU Group's managing director, said: "Currency futures contracts, probably dollar futures, would be traded on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. These contracts can be traded at any time until the end of June. The number of contracts taken out will depend on the size of the loan, which would remain in Swiss francs."

If sterling falls against the dollar, the value of the contracts will increase; if, on the other hand, sterling moves up against the dollar, their value will fall. Both rises and falls could be substantial, depending on the size of the loan.

Mr Petley said: "If sterling goes up against the dollar, the borrower will lose but hopefully he will recoup the loss on the Swiss franc debt." If the pound goes up against the Swiss franc, it will benefit the borrower in Swiss francs because his debt will fall.

Clients who have already accepted the risk of taking out foreign currency mortgages should also be able to afford

to take losses if they did decide to use futures, Mr Petley said.

He added: "The sort of client base we have is not a stupid one and their average income is £33,000 a year. Their average loan is £173,000. These people aren't children and they are utterly clear how the market works and what the risks are. It is unlikely that many of our clients will want to do this but we have to be sensitive to our clients' wishes."

Those whose exposure to the futures market is being managed on a discretionary basis by ECU Futures will not have to pay for additional losses if currencies move against them but could lose their 10 per cent deposits. Those who ask the group to deal with them on an executive only or advisory basis could face additional calls for money to cover losses.

Mr Petley said: "If the client is making the decisions, technically he will be open to margin calls."

Pru takes mystique out of managed currency

BY LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

PRUDENTIAL has re-launched its Jersey-based managed currency fund, which it has not marketed in Britain since the Financial Services Act was implemented. It now has Securities and Investments Board recognition and Alan Wren, managing director of Prudential Investment products, says: "We believe it's time to take the mystique out of managed currency funds and put them in the investment mainstream."

With a minimum investment of £1,000 and a front-end charge of 5 per cent the group is marketing it like an authorised unit trust, but Mr Wren says: "Managed currency investment is normally less risky than stock market

investment. Distinct from shares, currencies move in relation to each other and are unlikely to all go down at once."

Investments can be made in capital growth shares or income shares. With the former, the income and capital gains accumulate within the value of the shares and no tax has to be paid until the shares are sold. Income shares pay a dividend every six months. These are subject to tax. Estimated gross yield on the income shares is 8.39 per cent.

The group expects greater interest in the capital growth shares should the election result in a Labour victory, as they will allow higher rate taxpayers to defer tax liability.

The fund uses a pool of 200 banks worldwide, putting money on deposit for between seven days and a year. It is intended as a longer term investment, not a replacement for emergency money in a building society, said Mr Wren.

Fidelity launched its currency funds last year and has attracted about £35 million. Much of that has been invested in the past two weeks.

The Pru plan to follow up the Jersey fund with a Guernsey scheme. Both have the same investor compensation cover as UK funds. The sterling managed roll-up fund does not involve the investor in any taxable income until the money is withdrawn from the fund.

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Simple and instant settlement
Society offers shares deal

BY LIZ DOLAN

A NEW instant share dealing service has been set up by the Norwich and Peterborough Building Society, which was one of the eight special share shops promoted during the BT2 flotation.

The service is available at two branches of Waters Lunnon, the society's own stockbroking firm.

Norwich and Peterborough said the dealing system had been kept as simple as possible, as many small shareholders worried about being faced with complicated stock market procedures when they sold their shares.

Shareholders may take their certificates to the head office of Waters Lunnon in Redwell Street, Norwich, or to the broker's new London office in the building society's branch in High Holborn.

They are then told the current price of the shares and, if acceptable, sign the certificate or, if applicable, fill in the transfer form. The dealer immediately hands over a contract note and a cheque is made payable to the customer. New customers have to give "acceptable evidence of identity".

Customers do not have to be clients of the building soci-

ety. They pay 1.5 per cent commission with a minimum of £22.50. The instant settlement deal is available only on transactions worth up to £5,000. The speed of payment means charges are higher than for the society's other dealing services.

Norwich and Peterborough's normal dealing service, available in all its branches, costs a minimum of £20. Commission of 1.5 per cent is charged on deals up to £7,000.

Ian Ward, the chief general manager of Norwich and Peterborough, said: "Instant settlement is a natural progression as we develop further our share-dealing services." He added that the society planned eventually to extend the instant dealing service to all its building society branches.

The society has also extended its special offer for the sale of BT and 37 other privatisation issues until April 10. This allows anyone to deal in BT shares for £9.50 and in the other shares for 1 per cent commission. The minimum for the other shares is £14.

Families can sell shares in one company for up to four people with the same sur-

name for the same minimum fees.

Norwich and Peterborough was selected by the government as one of eight share shops offering cheap deals when the second tranche of BT was sold last year. The share shops offered an application service and cheap dealing. People who registered to buy BT were given four vouchers for cheap dealing at share shops.

The scheme was first announced in last year's Budget when Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, said he wanted share dealing to be made more widely available in the high street and that he intended to start with BT2.

Banks, building societies and brokers all submitted proposals as to how this could be done and the end result was share shops.

Because the BT share price did not offer instant large profits to buyers, the share shops handled fewer sales than had been expected.

However, in the run up to the election, some privatisation issue holders may now want to sell them. Mr Ward said: "The lead-up to an election usually sees an increase in stock market activity."

Advisers split over rush for inheritance tax planning

BY HELEN PRIDHAM

SOME insurance companies and financial intermediaries are encouraging people to take swift action before the election to make provision against inheritance tax. Other advisers, however, are arguing that it would be better not to rush into anything.

The current threshold for payment of inheritance tax is £147,000 and the rate at which the tax is paid is 40 per cent of any amount which exceeds that level.

The Budget proposals to increase the threshold by more than the rate of inflation to £150,000 had to be dropped in the rush to get the Finance Act through before Parliament was dissolved.

But if re-elected, this is the level that the Conservatives are expected to adopt.

The Labour party is considering the introduction of a

liability would attach to the person who receives the benefit rather than the estate if they win the election. The Liberal Democrats favour a similar system.

This would make the tax more difficult to avoid, though the Labour party has said that the exemption of transfers between spouses and of smaller estates will continue. While each individual might be given an exemption limit, however, the tax is likely to be calculated on the accumulated amount a beneficiary receives during a lifetime.

Financial advisers, such as Towny Law, are therefore urging people to take full advantage of the present tax regime by passing on wealth or setting up trusts as soon as possible.

Clive Scott Hopkins, of Towny Law, argues: "Time



may be short. Any legislation is unlikely to be backdated, but it could apply from the beginning of the tax year (April 6) or following a Labour budget in May or June."

He points out: "If you make gifts now, they become potentially exempt transfers under current rules, which means that if you live for at least seven years no tax will be payable."

"Alternatively, if you still need the income from your

capital, there are a variety of life assurance based trusts that can be used."

London Life is one company that has been promoting its trust schemes through a series of seminars. One is a loan trust scheme where an investor lends money to a trust set up for his or her heirs. The money goes into an investment bond from which the investor can continue to take an "income". But any growth on the capital is for the benefit of the beneficiaries and will, London Life said, be "free of inheritance tax".

Other schemes on offer that are also based on investment bonds include a will trust scheme, which is being marketed by Allied Dunbar, and a half loan, half gift scheme, which is being offered by companies such as Skandia Life. Some of the smogs to be borne in mind with these schemes, however, include the up-front charges, normally at least 5 per cent, which will be deducted from the capital by the insurance company to pay commission to the salesman, and that the investment could go down in value, especially if regular withdrawals are being made. In this case, tax savings on growth could become academic.

Peter Lawson, a solicitor and consultant with McKenna & Co, the City solicitor, also points out that trusts might not give complete protection anyway. He said: "An assessments (recipient based) tax could tax capital coming out of such trusts at the beneficiary's appropriate rate."

Mr Lawson cautions against rushing into any complicated trust arrangement. "It may be better to wait and see whether Labour intends to tax various types of beneficiaries differently. In Ireland, for example, there are nil rate bands varying from £10,000 to £150,000, according to the relationship to the donor." He agrees, however, that if people can make transfers now, it is wise to do so.

Mirra Elms, of Coopers &

Lybrand Deloitte, the accountant, points out: "Before making any transfers to children or grandchildren you should think of your own future needs — whether you will have enough income to live on in your old age without these assets."

Even if the Conservatives are returned to government, the scope for avoiding inheritance tax altogether will be limited for many homeowners whose home is their main asset as property prices, particularly in the South, can exceed £147,000.

One of the few ways round the problem is for the husband and wife to divide ownership on a tenants-in-common basis, rather than the more usual joint tenants basis, and gift each half separately to their children on their respective deaths. Each can then utilise the £147,000 nil rate band.

But Mrs Elms said: "This can leave the surviving spouse in a difficult position. The children may try to force a sale. And even if they do not want to, unforeseen circumstances can arise, such as a bankruptcy or a divorce which forces a child to realise his or her assets."

The alternative solution is to take out a low cost whole life policy to provide the money so that the heirs can meet the inheritance bill. Currently, such policies can be put in trust so that they are outside the estate.

Mr Lawson points out that under the Irish recipient-based system such provision is also permitted free of tax. He said: "The proceeds of various types of insurance policy are exempt from tax to the extent that the proceeds are applied in paying 'relevant tax'."

The cost of such a policy will depend on age and the amount of tax to be covered. The heirs of a couple in their sixties with an estate of £200,000, for example, would currently face a potential inheritance bill of just more than £20,000. The cost of a life policy to cover this liability would be about £400 a year.

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Japanese market fidgets on verge of recovery

By RUPERT BRUCE

THE long-suffering holders of Japanese unit trusts must be wondering if there is any hope. The stock market's blue chip index, the Nikkei average, took yet another fall yesterday and is standing at about half its 1989 peak.

Expert opinion is divided. Joe Williams, a portfolio manager with Morgan Grenfell's Japanese investment management team, confesses to being quite bullish about the immediate future. "I think the market will climb a wall of worry and it will do it from around these levels," he said.

Bruce Seaton, who is in charge of Far Eastern investments at Gartmore, is less sure. "It is possible for the market in Japan to go lower. But, just as importantly for the investor, we do not see the market going very much higher. So the opportunity cost is greater," he said. By that he means an investor is forgoing gains in other investments by investing in the Japanese market.

While the Nikkei average rose about sixfold in the Eighties, unitholders were well rewarded. According to Micropal, £100 invested in the average Japanese unit trust over the five years to the end of 1989 would have been worth £308. But £100 in the average trust over the two years to March 16 this year would be worth only £59.

Although there are no compre-



Critical juncture: domestic sentiment is crucial to an upturn on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, which suffered yet another fall this month

hensive figures, anecdotal evidence suggests that savers have remained loyal to their funds and have not sold, in spite of the downturn. The amount of money invested in Schroder Unit Trusts' two original Japan trusts has even increased steadily during the downturn. While £8 million was invested in the company's trusts in the last three months of 1989, almost £32 million was invested during the corresponding period

in 1991. Indeed, many new investments were made late last year when a number of fund management companies, including Schroder, saw a false dawn in the stock market and launched a clutch of new funds.

But the double whammy, which hit the stock market in 1989 as it became apparent that Japan's economy would slow and perhaps even experience a short recession, is still evident. In general, the

stock market has fallen with the profits outlook for companies, but stocks have also tumbled from the very high prices paid for them in the Eighties.

This month's tumbles were precipitated by profits warnings from companies such as Sony, which said it would make a loss this year, and the absence of a cut in interest rates that had been expected.

Marin Paling, chief investment strategist at James Capel, says the

stock market is at a "critical juncture". While he believes that the economy will begin to recover in the next three months, he adds that the sentiment of domestic investors is crucial. They have been net buyers of shares recently, but only just.

If the government cuts interest rates and brings forward infrastructure spending next week, as analysts hope, that could boost the market. But then, if there is any

truth in speculation about a bankruptcy among one of Japan's stockbrokers, that could send the shares reeling. A further fall in local land values could undermine share prices.

Mr Paling said: "In my view, the market is cheap. But I thought it was cheap when it was 10 per cent higher. There is a fair degree of risk at the moment."

What most do agree on is that Japan's stock market will not give

the same returns in the Nineties as it did in the Eighties. Denis Clough, who manages the Schroder Tokyo Fund, expects more Japanese companies' profits to fall, not just in the financial year which ends on Tuesday, but also next year. There are many technical reasons why more shares are likely to come on to the market and stifle any future rise.

Nor is the market likely to be rescued by share prices simply becoming more expensive compared with companies' earnings once again. Andrew Bell, BZW's director of equity strategy, said: "I think we would regard the bubble ratings as being those of a period of excess. I think the denouement was sufficient for the people involved that people will not push price/earnings ratios up to 60 or 70 times." Mr Bell thinks the Nikkei average could spend the whole decade between 20,000 and 30,000.

Mr Williams thinks blue chips will perform best in the market's initial recovery, but in the longer term he prefers so-called "red chips". He defines these as stocks that are big enough to attract the attentions of a big portfolio manager, yet small enough to grow in one specific business.

"It is a sideways [moving] market," he said. "We, as portfolio managers and analysts, have a huge new challenge to us, which is to pick companies that are going to grow."

BRIEFINGS

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1. Definitions (i) "Investor" means the individual named in the Application Form as the Applicant. (ii) "Plan" means the INVESTESCO MIM Management Ltd. General Personal Equity Plan (PEP) taken out by the Investor and referred to as the Plan. (iii) The Plan Manager means the Plan Manager appointed under the Plan and Conditions, separately. (iv) "Plan Manager" means INVESTESCO MIM Management Limited, which has been approved by the Commissioners of the Inland Revenue to act as a plan manager and which is a member of the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (IMRO) and as such the conduct of its investment business is regulated by IMRO. (v) "Regulations" means the Personal Equity Plan Regulations issued by H.M. Treasury as amended from time to time. (vi) "Tax Year" means the tax year from 6th April one year to 5th April in the next. (vii) "Associated Company" means any holding company of the Plan Manager or a subsidiary of any such holding company (as such terms are defined in the Companies Act 1985).

2. General (i) INVESTESCO MIM Management Limited, shall act as Plan Manager for the Investor in order to provide the benefits of a Personal Equity Plan in accordance with the Regulations and subject to these Terms and Conditions. (ii) Investors may invest in only one general PEP per Tax Year and by completing the application warrant that they do so with their own cash. (iii) Investors will not receive unauthorised calls from the Plan Manager or a subsidiary of the Plan Manager in writing or by telephone. (iv) The Plan Manager will be responsible for the administration of the Plan. (v) The Plan Manager will have the right from time to time to amend the Terms and Conditions providing any amendment does not result in the Plan ceasing to qualify under the Regulations. The Plan Manager will notify the Investor in writing of any such changes at least 14 days prior to any changes taking effect. (vi) The Plan Manager is an authorised person under the Financial Services Act 1986. Details of compensation rights can be obtained from the Plan Manager's Complaints Officer or a director from the Securities and Investments Board. Any complaints should be referred, in writing, to the Head of Investor Services, INVESTESCO MIM Management Ltd, for investigation. Investors also have the right to complain directly to IMRO or the Investment Referee.

3. Investments (i) Investments in the Plan may be made with cash or cheques only. (ii) The Plan Manager will, where relevant, be entitled, without prior disclosure or reference to the Investor, to offer or arrange Investments in which it, or an Associated Company may be interested including where the Plan Manager or an Associated Company has underwritten, managed, or arranged an issue or offer for sale during the previous twelve months. (iii) Distributions of income received within the Plan together with the appropriate tax credits and any interest arising from cash balances will be retained by the Plan unless otherwise agreed with the Investor. (iv) Actual yields could vary from estimates due to changes in the amounts and timing of company dividends. Any initial yield should be regarded as an indication only. Income distributions on income paying PEPs will normally be made twice yearly on dates to be notified by the Plan Manager. Payment is expected to be within one month of the relevant distribution date and may be subject to a minimum level of income available for distribution. The minimum figure is £10 (subject to change). (v) All investments held under the Plan will be held in the name of a designated nominee who will normally be an Associated Company. The Plan Manager will only accept liability for the negligence or default of third parties where they are an Associated Company. (vi) The Investor will be the beneficial owner of all investments held within the Plan. Documents evidencing title will be held by, or on behalf of, the Plan Manager. (vii) The Plan Manager will not be responsible for losses due to its negligence or wilful default.

4. Management (i) Pending investment or reinvestment, cash will be held in a Client Bank Account with the Royal Bank of Scotland Plc or for such other bank as the Plan Manager may from time to time nominate. Any cash held in the Plan will attract interest. (ii) Investors will be given an asset valuation and a statement of transactions as at the 5th April and 5th October or at such other dates as may be determined by the Plan Manager, in each case within twenty-five business days from the reporting date. Reports are not expected to include a measure of performance but, annually will contain a statement of the reasons for the purchases, sales and holding of investments. (iii) The Plan Manager will, if requested in writing, supply to the Investor copies of entries in its books relating to the Investor and may make a charge for this service. (iv) Investments will not be lent by the Plan Manager to a third party. The Plan Manager will not commit the Investor to any underwriting or borrow on his behalf. (v) The Investor hereby warrants that he/she is and will remain the sole, unencumbered, beneficial owner of the assets held under the Plan. (vi) The tax-free element of the scheme is withdrawn, the Plan will continue to be managed by the Plan Manager. New Terms and Conditions will be sent to the Investor. (vii) Management fees may be supplemented but will not be added by any other remuneration receivable by the Plan Manager in connection with transactions effected by the Plan Manager or for the Investor under or any other agreement. (viii) The Plan Manager may provide the Inland Revenue

truth in speculation about a bankruptcy among one of Japan's stockbrokers, that could send the shares reeling. A further fall in local land values could undermine share prices.

Mr Paling said: "In my view,

the market is cheap. But I thought it was cheap when it was 10 per

cent higher. There is a fair degree

of risk at the moment."

What most do agree on is that

Japan's stock market will not give

the same returns in the Nineties as it did in the Eighties. Denis Clough, who manages the Schroder Tokyo Fund, expects more Japanese companies' profits to fall, not just in the financial year which ends on Tuesday, but also next year. There are many technical reasons why more shares are likely to come on to the market and stifle any future rise.

Nor is the market likely to be

rescued by share prices simply

becoming more expensive com-

pared with companies' earnings

once again. Andrew Bell, BZW's

director of equity strategy, said:

"I think we would regard the

bubble ratings as being those of

a period of excess. I think the

denouement was sufficient for

the people involved that people

will not push price/earnings ratios up to 60 or

70 times." Mr Bell thinks the

Nikkei average could spend the

whole decade between 20,000 and

30,000.

Mr Williams thinks blue chips

will perform best in the market's

initial recovery, but in the longer

term he prefers so-called "red

chips". He defines these as

stocks that are big enough to

attract the attentions of a big

portfolio manager, yet small enough to grow in

one specific business.

"It is a sideways [moving]

market," he said. "We, as portfolio

managers and analysts, have a

huge new challenge to us, which is

to pick companies that are going

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Boycott
unhappy
cup ch

Exchange index compared with 1985 was up at 90.1 (day's range 90.0-90.2).

U.S. dollar	2.2601-2.2630	Austria	11.
U.S. dollar	0.6445-0.6525	Belgium (Com.)	34.
U.S. dollar	3315.39-3317.65	Canada	1.100
U.S. dollar	0.206-0.205	Denmark	5.1100

ht: open 10 , close 6 .

Grey areas emerge in ringer case evidence

Ten years ago today the Knighton Auction Stakes at Leicester produced one of the turf's most celebrated swindles. A horse purporting to be Flockton Grey, a well-bred two-year-old grey, won the five-furlong race by a staggering 20 lengths at 10-1 having been very heavily backed.

The suspicions of Jockey Club racing officials and police were aroused almost immediately. It was soon discovered that the race for two year-olds had, in fact, been won by a three-year-old substitute, strikingly similar in appearance to Flockton Grey.

At York Crown Court just over two years later, Kenneth Richardson, a millionaire and successful gambler, was found guilty with two other men of conspiring to defraud bookmakers.

Richardson, the supposed mastermind behind the swindle, was given a sus-

pened nine-month jail sentence and fined £20,000. He was subsequently warned off by the Jockey Club for 25 years.

During the trial the prosecution sought to prove the Leicester race had been won by Good Hand, a three-year-old grey, which, along with Flockton Grey, had once been owned by Richardson. The identity of the "ringer" was central to the case because after submissions by George Carnan, QC on behalf of Richardson, the judge instructed the jury that if it was not satisfied Good Hand was the horse involved "then the accused are not guilty of the offence."

The petition, prepared by two QCs, states categorically that Good Hand was not the winner of the Knighton Auction

Stakes and therefore the conviction was wrong. It suggests the "ugly possibility" that the whole object of the Flockton Grey affair was to "frame" Richardson, who had been making about £100,000 a year from betting on horses.

The petitioner is a highly successful self-made businessman. It is a well known fact of life that a man of that sort seldom lacks for enemies. And, apart from that, his conviction would result in him being warned off the turf. Since his successes in betting were almost legendary there would be obvious benefits in such a satisfactory result," the petition states.

Under guidelines set out by the attorney general, the prosecution is obliged to hand over to those representing the accused evidence which might assist the defence. In 1990, Richardson's so-

licitors discovered that photographs taken of Good Hand racing in 1981, a year before the fraud, had been initially obtained by Jockey Club security chiefs and the police prior to the trial but had not been given to the defence by the police.

The photographs show that Good Hand had a prominent white star on his forehead, unlike the Leicester race winner. Such identification material would have helped the defence case enormously, especially as it is generally accepted that dying a horse's hair grey is virtually impossible.

Although the police had pictures "strongly suggesting" the winner of the Knighton Auction Stakes was not Good Hand they "failed to supply these to the defence," the petition says.

Richardson's legal team also discovered that court witnesses had identified Good Hand "somewhat un-

tilated" in 1981 pictures of Good Hand.

If the "suppressed evidence" as the petition refers to it, was not sufficient to show that Good Hand was not involved in the swindle, new proof from an expert witness would appear to prove the point.

Dems Bellamy, a biochemist who is emeritus professor at the University of Wales, examined photographs of the Leicester winner and Good Hand and concluded they were different horses because of the positioning of whorls, a kind of equine fingerprint, on each animal's head.

"Good Hand and the winner both have whorls on their foreheads. But a careful examination reveals that the whorls are in different places.

This is crucial, and probably enough by itself to establish the petitioner's case. Whorls do not move."

petition explains. "The shape of the winner's head was different. The winner had a higher, broader brow than Good Hand. The relevant head proportions do not change with age."

Richardson, aged 54, told *The Times*: "I am seeking to have this totally wrong conviction quashed and I would like to go back to my hobby of racing. I would also like to see an investigation by an outside police force."

"I feel very angry that I have been convicted of this, which I did not do. I did not need to swap a horse. I don't need to cheat. I can get an edge in other ways."

Peter Martin, the Hull-based solicitor acting for Richardson, is critical of the police's actions. "The police know their obligations and they didn't hand over the 1981 photographs. The effect of that was to deprive Ken Richardson and the others of a fair trial."

Professionals take out foursomes title

Cooper douses the fire from the young pretenders

BY JOHN HENNESSY

JUST when a pair of young England golfers seemed to be fighting their way back in an absorbing final of the Sunningdale Foursomes yesterday, two crushing blows by Derrick Cooper, a Lancastrian professional, snuffed out the challenge.

Thus Cooper and Richard Boxall, from nearby Camberley, beat Paul Page and Paul Sherman, both from Kent, by 3 and 2. The winners took away cheques for £1,500 each.

It was a clash of contrasts, irreverently referred to as "the fat-belliedies against the fat-bellies" by one spectator. Cooper and Boxall are indeed, on the burly side but they are also experienced professionals who have won on the European tour. Page and Sherman are amateurs just setting out their impressive skills, aged 20 and 19 respectively. Since the winners had been.

Welsh pair improving

Hong Kong: Wales took a big step towards the Dunhill Cup finals in the qualifying tournament at Royal Hong Kong club yesterday, when, despite heavy rain, Phillip Price (70) and Mark Moulard (71) moved into joint sixth place on 288 after two rounds.

New Zealand (278) have a five-stroke lead over Canada and South Africa thanks to Grant Waite's 66, which was best of the day to hand. Twenty-seven three-man teams — the top two scores counting —

hunted all the way to the 18th in the morning semi-finals by another youthful amateur pair, Carl Warts and Michael Welch, you could understand the admiration Cooper and Boxall expressed for the state of English golf. Boxall declared this tournament to be harder to win than a European tour event.

The amateurs were receiving two strokes in the final but, ironically, had no need of them. At the 5th they achieved a birdie by reason of Page's putt from 15 feet and at the 12th, in spite of a lucky lie in the rough and another on a bank, Cooper was still eight feet away when he had to concede.

Page was the stronger element in the younger pair to start with, but he momentarily fell from grace with a tee-shot into the trees at the 7th. That gave the professionals the lead for the second time.

Cooper had heaved a sigh of relief in the morning after holing from five feet at the 18th against Welch and Warts. It was the third successive time they had had to play the 18th, but this time, for a change, they did not have to go down the 19th.

The other semi-final had turned on in head at the second extra hole, where Page chipped in from 20ft for a four and a Scottish professional pair, Alastair Webster and Kevin Staples, took three sandputts from 15 feet.

RESULTS: Semi-final: R. Boxall (Cambridge), R. Cooper (Camberley) bt M. Welch (Fat Valley) and C. Warts (Newtownards), 1 hole. P. Sherman (London) and P. Page (Kent) bt C. Warts and M. Staples (Newtownards) in a play-off at 20th. Final: Boxall and Cooper bt Page and Sherman, 3 and 2.



Unlucky 13th: Langer reacts to missing a birdie putt there in The Players Championship. Report, page 38

Johnson's game in full swing

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN RANCHO MIRAGE

TRISH Johnson has developed an encouraging catch-phrase these days: "I've never hit the ball so well." Not in the same electioneering class as "you've never had it so good," perhaps, but to a professional, competing in the Nabisco Dinah Shore at Mission Hills country club for the first time, a meaningful mantra.

After a first round of 71, one under par, on Thursday, Johnson, the former European No. 1, started the second round yesterday with two birdies to be just two shots off the lead. She dropped a shot

at the 4th but went out in 35, one under, by sinking par-saving putts of nine feet at both the 8th and 9th.

Johnson, who is being coached by Lawrence Farmer, of the West Middlesex club, has impressed herself with how well she strikes the ball when she gets Farmer's instructions right. She might not win at Palm Springs this week but she is one of several Europeans likely to succeed in the States before this year is out.

Even better placed was Liselotte Neumann, the for-

mer US women's Open champion, who lay second with Michelle McGann, a flamboyant American with a headlining taste in hair, after the first round. They shot 68, one behind Dale Eggington. Laura Davies, sadly, was going to struggle to make the cut after an opening 77.

RESULTS: First-round scores (US unless stated): 67: E. Eggington, L. Davies, M. McGann, D. Moore, 70: M. Neumann, C. Marino, D. Parikh, M. W. J. Carter, T. Green, L. Keen, B. Lohman, J. C. Lohman, C. Lohman, O. Ok-Hee Ko (5th), M. Z. Zolot, D. C. (Canary), S. Little, T. Johnson (GB), H. Stacy, C. Hill (Over 74); P. Wright (GB), D. Reed (GB), 77: L. Davies (GB).

HOCKEY

Middlesex will be strong opposition for Surrey

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

DAVID Knapp, of Guildford, will lead Surrey in their attempt to regain the county championship they last won in 1986. For their preliminary-round matches today and tomorrow, at Lincoln, Surrey have called on five players from Surbiton, the second division champions in the national league. Surrey are in one of the

toughest of the eight pools, facing strong opposition from Middlesex, the event's winners for the last four years. The holders will be without the best talent from Hounslow, Teddington and Southgate, but can still draw deeply on their vast stock of experience. The remaining teams in this pool are Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.

The northern champions,

Yorkshire, are in pool one at Sheffield, where they face opposition from Cheshire, Norfolk, Northumberland and Sussex. Yorkshire have lost two key players, Stamp and Bailey, who are unavailable.

Under the new format, the winners of each of the eight pools will qualify for the final stages on April 11 and 12 at St Albans. There are five teams in each pool, drawn from Lincoln and Sheffield.

preliminary round matches are being played at Birmingham University, Cannock, Peterborough, Basingstoke, Bournemouth, Portsmouth and Reading.

Great Britain will start the defence of their Olympic title at Barcelona on July 26 with a match against Egypt. The final will be played on August 8, starting at 7.30pm.

ENGLISH FORTNIGHTLY: July 28: C. Hill v Germany, 50 v India. August 1: Argentina v Australia.

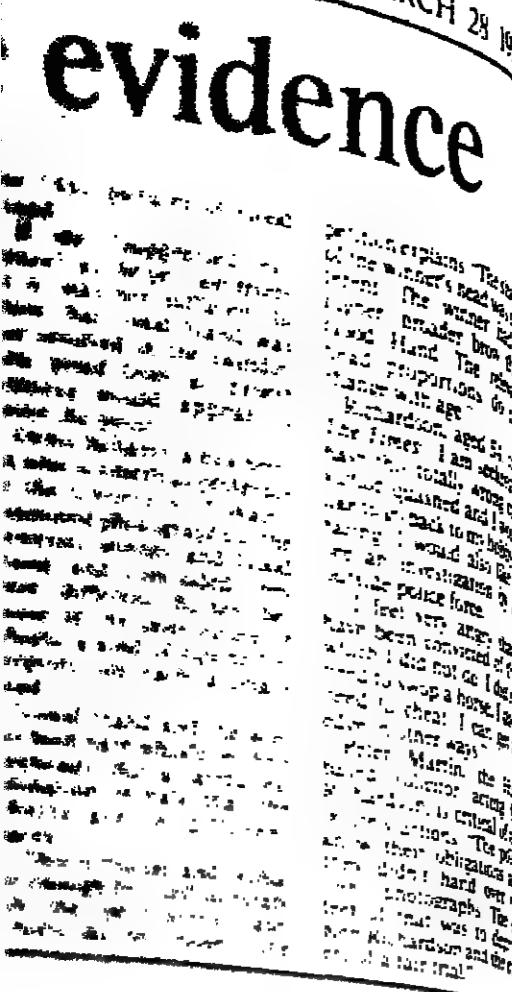
ANSWERS: 1. Denmark; 2. Steve Beddoe; 3. 1992; 4. St Helens; 5. Nora Perry.

BEVERLY

Prizewinner's Glasgow trip

MISS Barbara Beckett is the winner of *The Times* competition to mark the Pilkington Glass sponsorship of the European badminton championships in Glasgow from April 13 to 18. Miss Beckett, who lives at Northwood, Panshanger, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, and a friend will be the guests of the sponsors and of InterCity Scotland for a weekend in Glasgow for the final stages of the championships.

Answers: 1. Denmark; 2. Steve Beddoe; 3. 1992; 4. St Helens; 5. Nora Perry.



Trapper John to recoup losses

HORSES who ran well in defeat during the Cheltenham festival at Cheltenham look capable of gaining consolation prizes at Ascot today by winning the first three races.

Trapper John, who finished a good second to the Non-monic Way in the BonusPrint Stayers' Hurdle – only to be disqualified because his rider failed to draw the correct weight – can pick up the winning thread by landing the Lethaby and Christopher Long Distance Hurdle.

Before Cheltenham Trapper John had been successful at Navan and Haydock, where he gave Burgoyne, one of his rivals this afternoon, 7lb and a two-and-a-half-length beating. He should

account for the Peter Easterby-trained six-year-old again on the same terms.

After that unfortunate experience in the Stayers' Hurdle, Trapper John turned out again the following day at Cheltenham, in what some may describe as the true Irish tradition, to contest the Coral Golden Hurdle final under top weight. In the circumstances, he ran well to finish tenth.

While two races in two days would knock the stuffing out of most, Trapper John is obviously as tough as old boots because his trainer Michael

Morris is convinced that he will justify the expensive trip from Fethard, his base in the heart of Co Tipperary.

Ashfold Copse, who was third behind Theford Forest and Musin the Sun Alliance Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham after opening his account at Newbury, can regain the winning trail by capturing the Hen Harrier National Hunt Novices' Hurdle.

With Tinnyland, Buck Willow and Rough Quest standing their ground for the Golden Eagle Novices' Chase, we have a fine race in prospect.

Buck Willow will be carrying the late Jim Joe's second colours as a mark of respect to that fine old owner-breed, who died earlier this week.

From a sentimental point of view, it would be lovely to see Buck Willow win again but I cannot see him beating either Tinnyland or Rough Quest, who should be ideally suited to today's distance.

Tinnyland probably found the distance of the Aricle Challenge Trophy too short at Cheltenham where he was runner-up to Young Pokey, while Rough Quest arguably found the Sun Alliance Chase a shade too far when he only managed to finish fourth behind Minnehoma, Bradbury Star and Run For Free.

Earlier in the season Tinnyland scored over today's trip at Kempton, while Rough Quest did likewise at Huntingdon and Warwick.

Of the two, I marginally

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6.00 DYO 24 (F) J. Alshar 4.98 I. Parham 5

7.00 7.30 7.50 7.70 7.90

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- RUGBY UNION 33
- GOLF 34
- RACING 34, 35

THE TIMES SPORT

SATURDAY MARCH 28 1992

Premier League's offer falls short

Players' strike over TV deal looks inevitable

BY PETER BALL

A PLAYERS' strike against football's Premier League seems almost inevitable. The first division clubs yesterday threw down the gauntlet at their meeting at Lancaster Gate, offering only half the share of television money the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) was seeking.

The PFA had asked for ten per cent of the income from the television contract, in line with its entitlement under the agreement with the Football League. The Premier League responded yesterday by offering five per cent with a guaranteed minimum of £1 million. They also agreed to maintain the players' pension rights, and offered the PFA a place on a consultative committee of the game's chief executives.

"We have made a very fair, very reasonable offer," Sir John Quinton, chairman of the Premier League, said yesterday. "And the Premier League believe there is no justifiable basis for industrial action. A strike would be totally unnecessary, and a very sad day for football."

Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the PFA, rejected the Premier League's offer almost out of hand. "It will not meet our requirements," Taylor told Quinton after the three-hour meeting.

"It has now become clear that power lies with the first division chairmen, and they want to use it for confrontation," Taylor said. "We negotiated in good faith with Rich-

Parry and the League's officers, but they go away with an agreement and the 22 chairmen tear it up. I thought we had an agreement for a guarantee of £1.5 million, but we now see that is going backwards."

The strike ballot of the 594 first division players closes on April 3, with a result to be announced four days later.

Initially, at least, the players are expected to refuse to play in televised games, and the first match to be effected is likely to be the Rumbelows Cup final between Manchester United and Nottingham Forest on April 12.

Taylor kept the door to a last-minute settlement ajar by asking for a meeting next week with Quinton, but the Barclays chairman left no doubt that the Premier League's offer was non-negotiable. "We have put forward a proposal which is our bottom line," he said.

The players may take some convincing, and the Premier League has already drawn up contingency plans if the strike does go ahead. That may involve a recourse to legal action, particularly if the hawks among the first division chairmen have their way.

"We have legal opinion that there is no legal basis for an industrial dispute at the present time," Quinton said. Those who believe lawyers are the only ones to benefit from court action will be unsurprised to learn the PFA's legal advisers do not concur.

Photograph, page 37
Rich's view, page 37

S Africa welcomes 'raining champs'

FROM GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

IT MATTERED little to South African cricket followers that rain and silly rules bowed their team out of the World Cup, judging by the tumultuous reception they gave to the squad on its return from Australia yesterday.

Unprecedented scenes of jubilation greeted the players as they arrived at Johannesburg airport in the early hours of the morning. "Raining champs," one banner declared, as 5,000 supporters chanted: "We won, we won."

Keiper Wessels, the captain, told the multi-racial crowd: "Unfortunately it did not quite work out that way, but it's great to see South Africa as a united nation." Peter Kirsten, the leading batsman, added: "I would just like to say one thing. I am not available as president."

The climax of the celebrations came at noon, when police and firemen escorted the players on an open double-decker bus through the city centre, as air force jets roared overhead in close formation and a military helicopter dropped confetti on an estimated 10,000 people outside the city hall.

Office workers and street vendors crowded the pavements as hundreds more clambered on to post boxes,

England's prepare, page 36
World Cup verdict, page 36

Coker to return for cup

BY PETER BALL

TROY Coker, Australia's World Cup No. 8, will be available to enhance Hardinge's hopes of retaining the Pilkington Cup. Coker returns to Britain next week ready for the semi-final on April 4 against Leicester at the Stoop Memorial ground. If Harlequins win, Coker has promised club officials he will stay for the final on May 2.

The news may raise eyebrows around Welford Road, Leicester, for although Coker's journey may be acceptable under the competition rules, ethically it might upset some. He went home last month to take up an appointment in Brisbane.

Coleen Herring, the Harlequins secretary, said: "Troy has been a club member for two or three years and has played several games for us this season." Coker added: "I have a few loose ends to tidy up while I am in England... so I see no reason why I should not finish the season I started with Harlequins."

A spokesman for the United Cricket Board earned the biggest cheer when he raised his arms in a victory salute and declared: "Viva the South African people."

Richmond's goal, page 33
Club news, page 33

Looking good on the move

THE only problem with today's ultra-glamorous, super-sleek, sprayed-on, superhero running gear is that you cannot actually run in it. Not without running the risk of the coozie, anyway. But the love affair with lycra continues. Lycra, the material that does not conceal the bodily parts but throws them into ever-sharper relief. Athletes look a million dollars when they are standing still. But the female coozies, in particular, do not look so good if you are moving. You spend all the time before a race fidgeting with your leotard to make sure your bum hasn't fallen out. One top female athlete told this column: "And as soon as you start running, your bum falls out."

So now I bring great news to athletes everywhere. Nike has unveiled the official



Mystery winner: Stephen Wiles and the horse masquerading as Flockton Grey at Leicester in 1982

Ringer verdict questioned

Richard Evans finds a new twist in an infamous horse racing swindle

THE home secretary is being urged to quash the convictions of three men found guilty of an infamous racing swindle committed 10 years ago today following the discovery that police held back vital photographs from their trial.

The "suppressed evidence," with new expert opinion, meant the convictions in the celebrated Flockton Grey case were "unsafe, unsatisfactory and wrong," according to a petition drawn up by two leading QC's which has been sent to the home office.

Kenneth Richardson, a millionaire and successful gambler, was found guilty with two others in 1984 of conspiring to defraud bookmakers by running a three-year-old impostor under Flockton Grey's name in a race for two-year-olds at Leicester in March 1982.

The horse won by 20 lengths at 10-1 and was backed heavily.

The court case hinged on whether Good Hand, a three-year-old grey once owned, like the two-year-old Flockton Grey, by Richardson, had been the ringer. The jury decided it was.

However, Richardson's solicitors discovered two years ago that Humberside police had pictures before the trial "strongly suggesting" that Good Hand was not the winner, but did not hand them to the defence as they were required to do under the Attorney General's guidelines.

Richardson, who received a suspended jail sentence and a £20,000 fine, was subsequently warned off by the Jockey Club for 25 years. He continues to deny strenuously any part in the swindle.

Fresh evidence, page 34
Today's cards, page 35

Fresh face? Good Hand running in 1981

Living history

DEVELOPERS spare that tree. For once, such a plea has been heeded. The tree in question is a living chunk of sporting history. Manor Ground, the home of Ilkeston Town in Derbyshire, is being developed — that is to say, smashed up and built on — and the club play their last match there today. Ilkeston, in the West Midlands Regional League first division, will move to a new ground but the tree will remain in memory of an FA Cup first-round tie in 1951 against Rochdale.

Rochdale were a goal up when the ball got stuck in the tree. It was the first time a white ball had been used at Ilkeston and they didn't have a spare. The referee refused to allow play to continue with a brown ball. It took 20 minutes to get the ball down, most of which was spent ineffectually poking about with a clothesline prop. The referee suspected the delay was an attempt to con a financially rewarding replay out of the fixture and

Langer suffers a loss of form

FROM MITCHELL PLATTS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN PONTE VEDRA, FLORIDA

BERNHARD Langer returned with a second round of 74 as Craig Parry, of Australia, established the early halfway target alongside Davis Love III, of the United States, in The Players Championship here on the TPC Stadium course yesterday.

Parry, who won the Bell's Scottish Open last summer, compiled a round of 68 for a 36-hole total of 135, nine under par, which Love matched with a 68 of his own. Ian Baker-Finch, the Open champion, hoisted himself onto a leader board with a 67 for 137 and Tom Watson (70 for 138) remained in contention.

Nick Faldo, one of the later starters, was hoping to build on his first round of 68. It had been Langer's aim to do the same when he set out under clear blue skies with only the suggestion of a breeze, but Langer is struggling with all aspects of his game. He is the first to admit that he has difficulty in getting his backswing and downswing on a similar plane and that, when they are far apart, he has little knowledge as to where the ball is going.

"The problem is that I tend to lay the club off much like Raymond Floyd," he explained. "Then I have to bring it up, which I do, and although it looks in a good position, I can continue the movement so that I go over the top, which causes me to either pull-hook the ball or block it to the right."

Langer would appear to be pushing more shots than he is pulling, although that is obviously no consolation to him. He was out of luck at the 18th — his 9th — when a well-hit two iron kissed the branch of a tree on the right, causing the ball to ricochet at right-angles across the fairway before disappearing into a watery grave.

Meanwhile, Parry, who won the Australian Masters earlier this year, advanced towards the prospect of winning a tournament that carries with it a ten-year exemption on the US Tour. Parry, however, is unlikely to become a full-time player here as he enjoys being a free agent and playing in his native Australia in addition to Europe.

Faldo began his second round with a birdie at the 1st hole. Sandy Lyle, who had a first-round of 71, took six at the 2nd. Severiano Ballesteros and Ian Woosnam were both looking only to survive the halfway cut after first rounds of 75. Ballesteros gave himself encouragement with birdies at the 1st and 3rd holes.

EARLY LEADING SECOND-ROUND SCORES (US entries stated): 135: C Parry (Aus), 67; D Love III, 68; 138: P. Baker-Finch (Aus), 69; M. Norman, 67, 70; I. Baker-Finch (Aus), 70, 67, 138; T. Watson, 68; C. Beck, 71, 67; 140: J. Faldo, 68; M. McCormick, 69, 71, 140; T. Simpson, 69, 71; Other scores: 141: F. Stoen, 70, 71, 142: B. Langer (Ger), 68, 74; M. Mola, 70, 72; 143: C. Parry, 71, 73, 70, 144; C. P. Davis, 71, 73; G. Norman (Aus), 72, 72; M. Calzecchia, 71, 73, 150; C. Montgomerie (Gbr), 73, 73.

Photograph, page 34
Experience wins, page 34

Wine
have
the
go on

10

THE Haka, the Maori war cry, is part of rugby life. "Kamate, Kamate, ka ora, ka ora ora," the All Blacks roar before every game. Now Australian rugby people — both codes — want to introduce an Aboriginal war cry to their pre-match ritual. The Kangaroos — the league boys — used to do a war cry when they were in England on every tour between 1908 and 1967. Now they want to revive it.

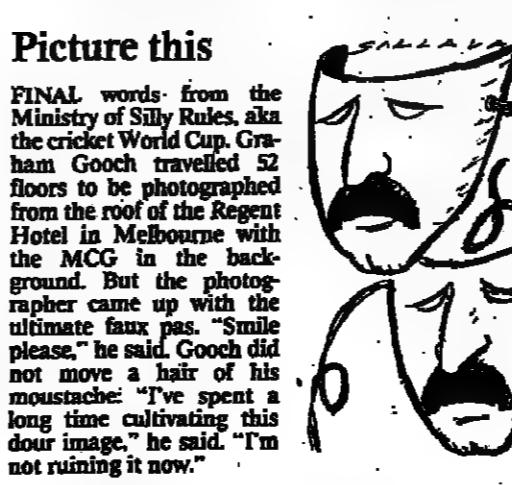
Reg Gasnier, former Kangaroo captain, said: "The opening line was 'vallee, mullara, choomoo, tingal, nah, nah, nah'. It means that we are a race of fighters descended from the wars. beware, beware, beware. I've never forgotten it."

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WEEKEND TIMES

SATURDAY MARCH 28 1992

Where have all the flowers gone?

Flora Britannica is a nationwide project to survey where wild plants stand in our culture. Richard Mabey believes that such a 'human dossier' for plants is vital

Most summers a curious tale of misanthropy leaks out of one of Britain's high-security nature reserves. The scene of the action is often different, but the story is the same. Wardens, fearful that some of the last surviving colonies of rare orchids may be dug up by piratical collectors, hack off the flower spikes as soon as they are in bud to make the plants less conspicuous. The plants survive — but only as emasculated, joyless, botanical specimens.

Whether true, or a kind of modern myth, the story does catch something of the vein of puritanism that bedevils our official attitudes towards wild flowers. We don't publicly *relish* them in the way we do birds. They have a faint, marginal image. Television largely ignores them because of the inconsiderate lack of movement, or anatomises them as biological wonders. They are distanced, as rarities, scientific specimens, or props in a nostalgic, Edwardian afterglow.

Yet down in the parish, the vernacular relationship with our flora is flourishing. We still kiss under the mistletoe (though without much clue as to why), thread daisy chains, make solemn black-lots of weeds, fight to save landmark trees, munch blackberries, put heather in the car radiator for good luck. And every November, in a remarkable survival of ancient plant symbolism, we wear poppies — a meaningful symbol of blood and new life ever since the Egyptians — for remembrance.

At the grassroots we still have an almost aboriginal, half-instinctive respect for wild plants. They chart the seasons for us, from primrose to holly, dene, colour our place-names, increasingly invade our houses as herbarium medicines, natural dyes, hand-made furniture. Above all, they help shape the character of the places where we live. It would be hard to think of chalk country, for example, shorn of the white plumes of old man's beard in the hedges, or moorland without heather.

These are all dynamic relationships, which are constantly adapting to change and picking up new meanings, and they are the channels I suspect, through which most people come to plants. When I was a teenage naturalist, I had time only for the dash and romance of birds, especially those that marked special moments of the year or favourite spots, such as swifts and barn owls.

A decade later it was the same sense of a meeting ground between the human and natural worlds that began to fascinate me about plants.

I'd begun haunting the north



We hope Flora Britannica encourages a more unified experience of local vegetation

RICHARD MABEY

in which plants settle into a human, cultural substrate. Sometimes the two processes proceed in parallel. But they can be intensely local, parochial almost, to such a degree that they haven't yet become part of popular knowledge. Japanese knotweed (a throw-out from Victorian gardens) has become established as our most aggressive and uncompromising shrubby weed. But has this begun to generate local nicknames?

Were any of the bizarre coinings volunteered during a House of Lords debate on weeds in 1989 really in current usage? Is anyone eating the young shoots, as they do in the Far East and the United States?

And what is the street-level opinion of another vast and vigorous weed, the giant hogweed (from the Caucasus mountains, circa 1893, again via Victorian gardens)? This was christened "the trifid" by the popular press back in 1970, when it was realised that the sap caused rashes of blisters on skin exposed to the sun. Children, no doubt fascinated by the plant's Gothic appearance, had been making pea-shooters out of its hollow stems. Have they given it any more expressive names, or

Rural expectations: "Colonies of plants are an integral part of our sense of locality and season. They are part of what makes one place so different from another"

worked out any ingenious ways of using the stems safely?

Nowhere they may be, but these alien weeds can sometimes create a real *genus loci*. Along the River Don in Sheffield there is an extraordinary population of fig trees, dense enough in one place to form a small wood. They are all about 70 years old and it looks as if their concentration in this incongruous spot may be intimately linked with Sheffield's economic history. The source of the seeds was most probably sewage (though just possibly refuse from sauce and pickle factories), but these Mediterranean plants almost certainly have the steel industry to thank for their successful establishment in the 1920s. At that time river water was used in the factories for cooling and the outfalls kept the downstream reaches of the Don at a steady 20°C — sufficient for the germination of the seeds. Following the decline of the steel industry, the river temperature returned more or less to normal and no new trees have been able to sprout. Dr Oliver Gilbert, who unravelled the figs' history, says "they are as much a part of Sheffield's industrial heritage as Bessemer converters, steam hammers and crucible

worth's host of daffodils, which still nod on the edges of Ullswater. Some are obstinate living monuments, which mark out the ground of old settlements: skeletal (but reviving) stems along the closes and boundary banks of vanished East Anglian villages; herbs such as burdock (once used in midwifery, and probably an abortifacient) among the ruins of nunneries in Glastonbury, Norwich and Cambridge.

Trees make the biggest contribution to a sense of place — though sometimes they are only fully appreciated when they are threatened. The story of the fall — and rise — of Selborne's churchyard yew is a striking example. This 1,500-year-old Hampshire tree, immortalised and measured by Gilbert White and William Cobbett, was blown down in the January 1990 gale, but was stood back on its feet after heroic efforts by local forestry students.

Days after replanting, a water main burst under the roots and sent them 36 hours of bounding drenching. And when the tree was relieved of its massive top branches and foliage to give its damaged roots a better chance to survive, the feel of the village green and churchyard was transformed, and they looked suddenly airy and light and right. Since then it has come more sharply into parish consciousness than ever before.

Old Selborne inhabitants have come long distances to buy souvenir slivers of the tree under which they used to meet and court

and have lunch, and larger pieces have been made into all kinds of woodware, including a concert flute for the church.

Often whole constellations of trees form a background so familiar that it is barely remarked on — even when the tree is as striking as the native black poplar. In the 1970s it was believed there were only 1,000 specimens left. But a long and exhaustive survey has turned up populations throughout England and Wales, especially on the Welsh borders, East Anglia and Gloucestershire.

The black poplar is a dramatically handsome tree. The trunk is massive and fissured, covered with bosses and burls, and often it develops a decided lean in middle age. The branches turn down towards their ends, then sweep up again into twigs which, once the voluptuous crimson catkins have fallen, carry dense switches of shiny, beech-shaped leaves. In the Vale of Aylesbury they are the commonest tree, a stunning sight as the amber buds and straw-yellow flower stalks shine in the spring sunshine.

Colonies of plants like this are an integral part of our sense of locality and season, part of what makes one place different from another. They are the most steadfast living things in the community and will have an increasing significance as political and economic change tends to make all places homogenous.

The aim of the Flora Britannica project is to raise our consciousness about local vegetation and its place in our lives; to record, before it is too late, the vernacular names of plants that are still current, the games that children play, the great surviving botanical landmarks, and the more modest but much-loved parish clumps, and the continual reinvention of meaning for our national flora.

Geoffrey Grigson, author of a pioneering if more historical book in a similar mould, *The Englishman's Flora*, 40 years ago, raised against our tendency to reduce the natural world to compartments — sentimental, scientific, exotic, tamed. We hope that Flora Britannica may encourage a more unified experience of plants and of how those that have found places in our lives help to blur that bothersome distinction between the "natural" and the "man-made". Nothing illustrates this better in early spring than the fortunes — and the mysteries — of the true wild daffodil. It is one of the best known but most local of our native lilies and its present distribution is a paradox. It is doggedly persistent and remarkably unfussy in its favoured localities (south Devon, for example), thriving on roadside verges and in paddocks and even at the edges of conifer plantations. But it is curiously absent over large areas of seemingly suitable habitat and has plainly declined drastically since John Gerard described it in 1597 as "growing almost everywhere through England". Are these gaps simply a result of unsuitable soils or climate? Or have local customs and attitudes towards the plant also influenced its distribution? Has there been transplanting, or an unusual degree of protectiveness in some of its traditional sites — or conversely, over-picking where it has vanished? Is there anywhere the flowers are still regarded as an economic crop, offered on a pay-at-the-gate and pick-your-own basis, as they were in the 1930s in the "Golden Triangle" in Gloucestershire? The Great Western Railway used to

run weekend "Daffodil Specials" to this stretch of country between Dymock and Newent, which provided a strong financial incentive to landowners to look after their flower meadows and orchards.

Now, by one of those ironies of history, the "Lent lily's" fortunes may be changing. The fashion for wild gardens has made it a popular species in cultivation and there are already signs that it is escaping back into the wild from these cosseted colonies. It is a perfect symbol of the versatility and resilience of nature and of the ancient relationship between plants and ourselves.



Join in the great British flora hunt

The Flora Britannica will depend entirely on information sent in from community groups, families — and Times readers — across Britain over the next 18 months. Rather than a botanical flora, the resulting book will aim to be a cultural one, assembled from the letters — be they stories, recipes, memories, or any other insight into how wild plants touch our lives today. In its vast scope, it will be the first project of its type in the country.

To participate, the first step is to read the Flora Britannica handbook, which describes the kind of information sought and how to take part in the project. Find it through local conservation groups, or direct from Flora Britannica, The Handbook, PO Box 7, London W3 6JX (£1 each including p&p; make cheques payable to BBC Magazines). The publishers will try to name everyone who contributes to the final book.

FOOD AND DRINK PAGE 6	CHILDREN PAGE 8
Frances Bissell continues the wild plants theme by foraging for greens in the fields and hedgerows	Two-legged kid meets four-legged namesake as Lee Rodwell reports on Britain's booming farm attractions

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FILM

APOCALYPSE NOW! (18): Coppola's gung-ho Vietnam odyssey, re-rewritten in 70mm. Martin Sheen as the special agent with orders to kill Marion Brando's rogue Colonel. MGM Shaftesbury Avenue (071-836 6279/79 7025).

BARTON FINK (15): The Coen brothers' marvelous macabre comedy about a New York playwright all at sea in 1940s Hollywood. Starring John Turturro, John Goodman. A triple Cannes prizewinner. Barbićan (071-638 8891) René (071-837 8402).



Drifter: River Phoenix stars in *My Own Private Idaho*

LA HUELLE NOIR (15): Jacques Rivette's hypnotic exploration of a painter and his model, struggling to complete an abandoned canvas. Close to a masterpiece. With Michel Piccoli, Emmanuelle Béart, Jane Birkin. Cheltenham (071-351 3742/5747) Metro (071-437 0757) René (071-8402).

BLACK ROBE (15): Seventeenth-century Jesuit (Lothaire Bluteau) tries to convert Indians in northern Quebec. Intelligent epic from Brian Moore's novel. Director, Bruce Beresford. MGM Tooting Court Road (071-936 6148).

BUGSY (18): Warren Beatty as Bugsy Siegel, the gangster who invented Las Vegas. Sleek, witty, dazzling to behold. Starring Anne Bening; director, Barry Levinson. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) MGM Cheltenham (071-352 5095) Odeon Kensington (0426 914666) Odeon Leicester Square (0426 914666) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 2772) Whitley's (071-792 3332).

CAPE FEAR (18): Demonic avenger Robert De Niro tempts Nick Nolte and family. Martin Scorsese's ferocious, unpleasant remake of a classic revenge thriller. With Jessica Lange, Juliette Lewis. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) Empire (071-497 9995) MGM Baker Street (071-722 9772) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Whitley's (071-792 3332).

THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE (15): Krzysztof Kieslowski's brilliantly filmed conundrum about two girls (one Polish, one French) who seem to share a life. With Irène Jacob, Philippe Volter. Curzon Mayfair (071-485 8865).

FREELACE (15): Emilio Estevez is kidnapped into the future for a mind transplant. Depressing high-tach adventure; with Mick Jagger, Anthony Hopkins. Director, Geoff Murphy. MGM Fulham Road (071-839 1527) MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Whitley's (071-792 3332).

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AT THE WHISTLE STOP CAFE (12): Heart-warming lies of feisty folks down South. Shallow, but ingratiating. With Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary Stuart Masterson; director, Jon Avnet. Notting Hill Coronet (071-727 6705) Odeon Haymarket (0426 915335) Odeon Kensington (0426 914666) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 2772) Whitley's (071-792 3332).

HEAR MY SONG (15): Promoter seeks reclusive Irish tenor Josef Locke, wanted in Britain for tax evasion. Shaggy dog tale with modest pleasures. Starring Ned Beatty, Adrian Dunbar; director, Peter Chelsom. MGM Fulham Road (071-839 1527) Odeon Kensington (0426 914666) Odeon Marble Arch (0426 914501) Whitley's (071-792 3332).

HIGH HEELS (18): Talkative melodrama of family secrets from Spanish master of camp, Pedro Almodóvar. With Victoria Abril, Marisa Paredes. Madrid (03-352 5066) Goya (071-727 4043) Lumière (071-836 0691) Screen on the Hill (071-435 3365).

J'EMBRASSE PAS (18): Later-day Candide becomes a Paris hustler. Accomplished, but unedifying. With Manuel Blanc, Emmanuelle Béart, Philippe Noiret; director, André Techine. MGM Piccadilly (071-437 3561) MGM Tooting Court Road (071-636 6148).

JFK (15): Oliver Stone's contentious, electrifying, three-hour drama about the Kennedy

assassination. Kevin Costner as crusading D.A. Jim Garrison; a bustling supporting cast. MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Odeon Mezzanine (0426 915683) Plaza (071-437 9999).

LATE FOR DINNER (PG): Two ordinary lads awake from a 25-year deep freeze. Unsatisfying comic whimsy from director W.D. Richter. With Brian Wimmer, Peter Berg. MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031).

LIGHT SLEEPER (15): Lugubrious elegy to the Eighties drug scene from writer-director Paul Schrader, partly saved by Willem Dafoe as a lone stumbling towards redemption. With Susan Sarandon. Curzon West End (071-639 4805).

MY OWN PRIVATE IDAHO (18): Gus Van Sant's quirky portrait of two drifters searching for a place to call home: striking and aggravating by turns. With River Phoenix, Keanu Reeves. Camden Plaza (071-485 2443) MGM Fulham Road (071-370 2636) MGM Shaftesbury Avenue (071-636 6279/79 7025) MGM Trocadero (071-434 0031) Screen on the Green (071-226 3520).

NECESSARY ROUGHNESS (12): American college football team makes good. Crucially dull with cheap gags. With Scott Baio, Heidi Elson, Robert Loggia; director, Stan Dragoti. MGM Oxford Street (071-636 0310) Plaza (071-437 9999).

THE PRINCE OF TIDES (15): New York psychiatrist helps football coach face family secrets.

Romantic drama with ideas above its station, grandly acted by Nick Nolte. Barbet Schroeder directs and coproduces to save it. MGM Baker Street (071-935 9772) MGM Chelsea (071-352 5262) MGM Oxford Street (071-436 0310) Odeon: Kensington (0426 914666) Mezzanine (0426 915683) Whitesley's (071-792 3332).

SHINING THROUGH (15): Opulent, preposterous farce drama. With Melvyn Griffiths spying for the U.S. Government in Las Vegas. Starring Robert De Niro, Michael Douglas; director, David Selzer. Barbićan (071-636 8891) Odeon: Kensington (0426 914666) West End (0426 915574).

THEATRE

LONDON

HACK UP THE HAIRSE AND LET THEM SWEEP THE FLOWERS: Intriguingly titled play by William Gaddis. A team of water-filth scientists compete to grow wealth by making us healthy. Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (071-722 9301). Preview from Thurs, 8pm. Opens April 6.

DANCING AT LUGHNASA: Brian Friel's Olivier Award-winning memory-play, set in Thirties Donegal. Garside, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-944 5085). Mon-Sat, 8pm, matr Thurs, 8pm, Sat, 5pm.

THE VIRTUOSO: Shadwell's Restoration comedy of bad behaviour in the home, clinched with wive by Phyllida Lloyd. The Pit, Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 2252). Thurs-Sat, 7.30pm, matr Sat, 8pm, matr Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5pm.

THE WHIRLWIND: Michael Fassbender's Restoration comedy of bad behaviour in the home, clinched with wive by Phyllida Lloyd. The Pit, Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 2252). Thurs-Sat, 7.30pm, matr Sat, 8pm, matr Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5pm.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN: Juliet Stevenson, Michael Byrne, Bill Paterson star in Arne

Dormann's German political drama. Best play of 1991. State of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-836 5122). Mon-Sat, 8pm, matr Thurs, 8pm, Sat, 5pm.

FIGHTING FOR THE DUNGHILL: First play by Guy Jenkins, author of *Drop the Dead Donkey*, on the turbulent life of the caricaturist Gilray (James Bolam), scourge of politicians in Georgian England. Whitechapel Theatre, Dingwall Road, East Croydon (081-680 4060). Opens Tues, Sun, Tues-Sat, 8pm, matr Sun, 5pm.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE: Paul Scofield and Vanessa Redgrave head Trevor Nunn's splendid cast in Shaw's timeless, state-of-England drama. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (071-530 8800). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, matr Wed, Sat, 2.30pm.

FARNHAM: Holidaying on a barge, a property developer and a local councillor unwisely discuss business in Robin Hawdon's new comedy, *Don't Rock the Boat*. Redgrave Theatre, Brightwells (0272 715301). Opens Wed, 7.30pm, Thurs, 7.30pm, then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, April 8, 9, 11, 25 and May 2, 2.30pm.

REGIONAL

BRISTOL: The English at play, keen on a flutter but keener for a winner, observed by Howard Brenton in his 1977 play *Empire Down*.

THEATRE ROYAL, KING STREET: (0272 250250). Preview Wed, 7.30pm. Opens Thurs, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, matr Sat, 11, 16, 18, 2.30pm.

FARNHAM: Holidaying on a barge, a property developer and a local councillor unwisely discuss business in Robin Hawdon's new comedy, *Don't Rock the Boat*. Redgrave Theatre, Brightwells (0272 715301). Opens Wed, 7.30pm, Thurs, 7.30pm, Sun, 5pm, matr Sat, 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm.

MANCHESTER: The excellent cast from *Romeo and Juliet* now tackle Miller's *A View from a Bridge*, with Jonathan Hackett as the stubborn longshoreman, Eddie.

Royal Exchange, St Ann's Square (0161-833 9333). Preview Wed, 7.30pm. Opens Thurs, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, matr Wed, 7pm, Fri and Sat, 8pm, matr Sat, 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm.

DESSOZ RAINBOW: The elegant Hungarian pianist gives an attractive luncheon programme which includes extracts from his compatriot Gyorgy Kurtag's *Games*, Haydn's F minor Variations and Beethoven's Sonata in E flat, Op 31 No 1.

The concert will be relayed on Radio 3.

ST JOHN'S, SMITH SQUARE, LONDON (071-222 1061). Mon, 1pm.

TOWARDS THE MILLENNIUM: Simon Rattle's journey continues with two classic chamber dramas from the second decade of the century. Schoenberg's settings of "three times seven" poems of Giraud, *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912) and Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* (1918). The musicians are from the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. In the Schoenberg Elgar, Ross sing-speaks and Emanuel Ax is the pianist, while in the Stravinsky the actors are from the Trestle Theatre Company.

ADRIAN BOULT HALL, PARADE PLACE, BIRMINGHAM (021-236 2392/3889), tomorrow, 7.30pm.

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:

Continuing in the series, Rattle and orchestra give three performances of the same seminal piece by Schoenberg, *Pierrot Lunaire*, with Debussy's evocative and equally innovative orchestral images, composed over the period from 1905 until 1912 (again with Emanuel Ax as the soloist). There is also Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto (1911-12), an exquisitely brilliant example of the young man's art which caused a furor when first performed.

ST DAVID'S HALL, CARDIFF (0222 371230), Tues, 7.30pm. **Symphony Hall, Birmingham** (021-212 3233), Wed, 7.30pm. **Festival Hall, South Bank, London** (071-928 8800), Thurs, 7.30pm.

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:

One of the brightest young conductors now on the circuit, the Kent Nagano

assumes the baton for a programme of Debussy's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto.

BOX OFFICE 081-940 0088 Eve 7.45, Mats Wed, Sat 2.30pm.

Figure of fun: James Bolam in *Fighting for the Dunghill*

HENRY IV PART 1: Julian Glover, Robert Stephens, Michael Maloney in Adrian Noble's superb production from last year's Stratford season.

Barbićan (071-638 8891). Preview tonight, Mon; opens Tues, 7pm and then continues in the repertoire.

JUSTIFIED: Camus's 1949 critique of revolutionary violence, *Les Justes*, set in Tsarist Russia and in repertory.



When family affairs get out of control: Victoria Abril (left) and Marisa Paredes play rivalrous daughter and mother in Almodóvar's camp melodrama, *High Heels*



Impressive: Gregory Yurishik plays the part of William Tell

performed by new company, *Entourage*. Lyric Studio Theatre, King Street, W1 (0171-741 8701). Opens Tues, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm.

MUSIC

OPERA

DON CARLOS: A new production for English National Opera of Verdi's opera by David Pountney, opens this week. Mark Elder conducts a strong cast in this vast, grand drama of conflict between personal and political demands. Rosalind Plowright returns to the house as Elisabeth. Edmund Barham sings Don Carlos, Linda Birnbaum sings Princesa Eboli, Gwynne Howell takes the role of King Philip and Richard Van Allan lords it as the Grand Inquisitor. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-636 5116). Mon-Sat, 8pm, matr Wed, 8pm, matr Sat, 5pm.

NEVER MIND THE BALLOT: A week of political stand-up comedy. Packed with disrespect and a whole line-up each night. Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (071-730 1745). Tues-Sat, 8pm.

STRAIGHT AND NARROW: Nicholas Lyndhurst, Neil Duglass and Carmel McSharry in lifeless comedy about a doting mother's worries, notably her gay son. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-867 1116). Mon-Sat, 8pm, matr Wed, 8pm, matr Sat, 5pm.

NEVER MIND THE BALLOT: A week of political stand-up comedy. Packed with disrespect and a whole line-up each night. Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (071-730 1745). Tues-Sat, 8pm.

RECENTLY APPOINTED as the new Music Director of the Hallé Orchestra, conducts a magnificent programme of Music: *Boulez's Memoria*, for flute (Paul Edmund-Davies) and chamber orchestra (1973-5), Beethoven's "Emperor" Piano Concerto, with Alfred Brendel, and the suite from Bartók's ballet *The Wooden Prince* — as it happens, another work from the second decade of our century, though these three dances were extracted only in the Twenties.

BARBICAN, Silk Street, London EC1 (071-636 8891), Thurs, 7.45pm.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: Kurt Masur, who has just settled into one of the hottest seats in music — music director of the New York Philharmonic — is not only chief for his conducting of monolithic Austro-German classics. So a programme of Hindemith, Gershwin and Tchaikovsky may reveal hidden insights. The vivacious French pianist Cécile Ousset is the soloist in *Rhapsody in Blue*.

REDISCOVERING POMPEII: In 79AD Pompeii was caught like a fly in amber, but that does not mean that nothing changes now. Since the last Pompeii exhibition in London, excavation has continued, revolutionised, and all kinds of new discoveries have been made. This new show not only reveals many of these new finds on the spot, but also shows the world a picture of the life and death of Pompeii.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, Covent Garden, London WC2 (071-242 1319). Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, Sun, 4-5.30pm, opens 3 September 1992.

REDISCOVERING POMPEII: In 79AD Pompeii was caught like a fly in amber, but that does not mean that nothing changes now. Since the last Pompeii exhibition in London, excavation has continued, revolutionised, and all kinds of new discoveries have been made. This new show not only reveals many of these new finds on the spot, but also shows the world a picture of the life and death of Pompeii.

THE FALL: Back on cracking form with their new album *Code*, Selfish, Mark E. Smith and company bring their caustic sentiments and visceral funk to the capital.

BRIDGBURY ACADEMY</b

Think like a fish - and forget it

Lynne Truss switches into the 'Will she, won't she' world of people and pandas - and wonders whether it was worth it

When I visited Los Angeles in January, I stayed a few nights with a friend who had deprived himself of television, and consequently lived in a deathly quiet apartment with only plain white walls to look at.

"Ooh yes!" I said (aghast), when I first saw the place. "This is nice kind of horsey." He didn't say anything; I sensed he was depressed. "And here's another thing," I said, waltzing into the big, blank floor space in the living-room. "One advantage to having no furniture - lots of room to dance."

He looked at me as though my head had just revolved through 360 degrees on my shoulders. Something wrong here, I thought, but I kept smiling. I looked around for something else to say, and saw a lamp in a far corner. "Nice lamp," I said, tentatively. "No it is not," he said, breaking his silence at last. "To call that lamp a nice lamp would be absurd." Lumme, I thought. And I pictured the 6,000 miles I had just flown, to end up in a horror movie called *The Apartment that Time Forgot*.

The absence of a television set was clearly part of a much larger plan of misery and self-punishment. This man was limbering up for a barbed-wire vest. He claimed not to pine for television, but since he habitually sat in hunched foetal positions with a faraway look in his eyes I don't know who he thought he was fooling.

Anyway, the reason I mention all this is that when Channel 4 started to screen the American series *Northern Exposure*, I experienced a bit of an after-shock: because it was *Northern Exposure* deprivation which most exacerbated my friend's emotional turmoil. On Monday nights he would get all grim around the mouth when he knew that the programme was starting. And then he would make himself a cup of weak herbal tea (in the apartment's only tea cup) and disappear to bed without saying goodnight.

Northern Exposure has a lot to answer for; and I have watched its first two episodes rather warily, worrying what it might tell me about my friend's behaviour. I expected it to be about paranoia initially, as it concerns a New York doctor forced by a contractual McGuffin to work in a remote, small-town Alaska for four years. But it is too hokey for paranoia: there are too many comic native

REVIEW

Americans. The boss of the town appears to be Maurice (pronounced Mo-Reece), an ex-astronaut who sports a Nass beany hat; while love interest focuses on the beautiful Maggie (Janine Turner), but only in the most tangential way, as she is portrayed as omni-competent, independent and distinctly uninterested. She is the town's aircraft pilot, as well as being an expert on plumbing, and she despises the New York doctor for his do-it-yourself inadequacies.

There seems to be nothing cooking here at all, actually, yet for followers of the third series in the States, the issue of 'will she, won't she' is reaching fever pitch.

I can't imagine why my friend suffered such bad withdrawal symptoms. But these are early days. The pre-publicity linked the series with *Twin Peaks*, but it reminds me more of Garrison Keillor's *Lake Wobegon Days*. People in *Northern Exposure* have a horrible tendency to learn many moral lessons about themselves ("I'm sorry, Mo-Reece, it was my foolish pride"), after which life moves on, whimsically.

This week, our fresh-faced hero spent time with a deeply lined native American witch-doctor who told him with great mystical authority, "To catch a fish, you got to think like a fish." Perhaps this was a joke, but I doubt it. I think it was supposed to strike you as something wise and deeply comforting. To catch a fish, you got to think like a fish. Ho hum. Presumably the latest research on fishy neural skills is not available to Alaskan witch-doctors, or they would hesitate to give such advice.

A fish has an attention span of about three seconds. Think like a fish, then, and you will immediately forget who you are and why you are standing on a river bank with a long stick in your hand.

In any case, most animals are a closed book when it comes to mind-reading and this is surely a blessing. Despite my hopeless anthropomorphism about cats I have always resisted the "If only he could speak" argument, convinced that the contents of a cat's mind would come as a dreadful shock. "What a nice collar," one would say, in one's special talking-to-kitties voice. "It is not a nice collar," he would snap back, grumpily. "To call this collar a



Bamboo curtain on love: pandas are not what they're cracked up to be - she may prefer a leg of deer to his legover bamboo bribe

nice collar would be absurd."

The great paradox of the giant pandas - as seen on the recent *Arena* (BBC2) about Chi-Chi and *Wildlife on One* last Monday (BBC1) - is that its friendly face appears to be a wide-open window on the soul, while the workings of its brain are like those of a black cat in a coal mine. In the days of the Chi-Chi and An-An débâcle, you can imagine the no-keepers of *de tente* sticking posters on their walls: "If you want to make a panda, think like a panda." But how can you begin to empathise with a creature who thinks, "Well, I'll eat some more bamboo I suppose" for eight hours at a stretch each day?

Was diet the main problem with Chi-Chi's libido - the famous "will she, won't she" of the 1960s? The *Arena* (which was fascinating) showed lots of memory-lane footage of Chi-Chi cuffing the amorous An-An around the bonce and lumbering off again, in a way that

brought tears to the eyes. Similarly, in Monday's *Wildlife on One*, there were other girl pandas holding out for Mr Right, and knocking the blokes about. But it occurred to me that these boy pandas may be old-school romantic types who think they can buy sex with flowers and a dinner-for-two - all the while forgetting that the dimly restricted flora of the Chinese mountains dooms the formula to failure.

Boy panda: "Look what I brought you, darling."

Girl panda (not looking up): "Don't tell me, Bamboo."

Boy panda: "Well, yes. Um... what say we mosey down to that new place round the corner and get our paws sticky?"

Girl panda: "Don't waste your money, Sunshine. It will be bamboo specials, mark my words."

Both programmes were keen to impress on us that pandas are not cuddly (Chi-Chi was a spineful little

girl, her keeper said), but failed to convince. In *Wildlife on One*, we were shown a panda eating a deer leg, which the commentary insisted was a shocking corrective to the cuddly image. But honestly, it seemed OK to me. In any case, the anti-cuddly argument was seriously undermined by a marvellous sequence in which a panda climbed up a tree, leaned through a cleft in its upper branches, and lost its balance, so that it got stuck (very cutely) like Winnie the Pooh in the rabbit hole.

Finally, what a relief that *Channel 4's Camomile Lawn* is all over. A series so obviously inspired by the imperative "think like a fish" has never before graced our screens. Cold and soulless, the characters floated by displaying the attention-span and emotional profundity of the average guppy.

Moreover, despite its ostensible interest in the passage of time, with tiresome flashbacks, any sense of development or change

was perversely lacking. In fact, the habit of perpetual reminiscence paradoxically brought every event on to the same flat plane of action.

In character, emotion and sense of development, then, *The Camomile Lawn* had the depth of, well, of a camomile lawn.

Perhaps all this "Do you remember" stuff was just awkward exposition for the benefit of new viewers, tuning in after the first episode. Which makes it all the more tragic and pointless, because audiences were much more likely to jump off this particular bandwagon than to clamber on to it.

Perhaps *The Camomile Lawn* just lacked the "will she, won't she" element which makes people yearn (unto melancholy madness sometimes) for *Northern Exposure*, and made Chi-Chi the most famous panda in the world. In *The Camomile Lawn*, one could only ask "would she, wouldn't she, if she hadn't done it already?". Which is a lot less interesting somehow.

PREVIEW

• *Jeeves and Wooster* (tomorrow, ITV, 8.45pm) I look forward to each new instalment of this Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie incarnation for all sorts of reasons, but I never thought miniature deckchairs would be one of them. This new series sees Bertie and Jeeves heading right-ho for Manhatten aboard the *Île de France*, and humour has it that the designer Eileen Diss has created ingenious shipboard settings, including a trick-perspective sundae featuring deckchairs of dwindling size.

I am told that the production style of the new series (six) is generally snappier than before, and that the colour temperature has been toned to greys and whites to give a more cinematic sense of Cole Porter's New York, where Bertie falls among artists, poets and Dixieland jazz bands (as well as the usual drones, aunts and mad-bull millionaires).

• *Without Walls: J'Accuse* (Agatha Christie, Tuesday, Channel 4, 9pm) It was good to see Robert McKee's *J'Accuse* (about *Citizen Kane*) win a Bafta last Sunday, but bizarre that McKee's name was hardly mentioned. Instead, the series producer, Gary Johnstone, collected the award on his own. Surely the quality of *J'Accuse* programmes depends heavily on the passion and thought of the presenter? If McKee had not cared so much about *Kane* there would have been no programme. So wish good luck to Michael Dibdin with *Tuesday's coup d'état* against the so-called Queen of Crime.

And watch out for *Reel Secrets*, which follows at 9.30pm (see below): the first of three cinema genre lectures by the doublets all-forgetting Robert McKee. His delivery is mesmerising and his thick, black, emphatic eyebrows (contrasting with grey hair) have to be seen to be believed.

• *Timewatch: The Story of Elisabeth Nietzsche* (Wednesday, BBC2, 8.10pm)

Being born the sister of Friedrich Nietzsche is the kind of handicap that either makes or breaks people, I suppose. For Elisabeth Nietzsche, it meant leaving Germany in 1887, travelling to Paraguay, and starting her own master race in a jungle clearing. The interesting thing about her lost tribe of vegetarian Jew-haters is that it still exists, presumably practising eugenics and ill-farmed babies.

Nazi fugitives made a beeline for it after the war; Josef Mengel pronounced it a home from home. Elisabeth Nietzsche stayed only two years, returning to Europe to nurse her brother through his final illness (she later founded the Nietzsche Archive).

Timewatch tells her story in two parts, and visits the shy Argan go-steppers of South America.

War of the literary titans

The Last Romantics, on BBC2 tomorrow night, focuses on the literary squabbles of F.R. Leavis and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch



No quarter: Leo McKern and Ian Holm do battle over the merits of writers' styles

Whether the great literary critic F.R. Leavis would have approved of the poetic licence with which his life is treated in Nigel Williams's film *The Last Romantics* (tomorrow, BBC2, 10pm) is arguable. But then he was deeply suspicious of the mass media, believing it to threaten the continuity of English life and literature.

Williams is a child of television, resident editor of the documentary series *Bookmark* as well as a playwright. His approach to the life of Leavis is, he says: "a story that might have been, an imaginative reworking of the lives of two great critics."

The other critic was Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, who held Cambridge's chair of English when Leavis was an undergraduate. Leavis attacked Quiller-Couch's taste for "late Victorian poesy" and instead promoted the work of T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound.

In *The Last Romantics* this literary difference of opinion is transformed into a tale of love and betrayal that has the elements of a thriller. In old age, Williams' Leavis, played by Ian Holm, remembers his betrayal of his mentor as he faces the defection of one of his most devoted students.

Earlier, Quiller-Couch (Leo McKern) had given Leavis a treasured first edition of *Wordsworth*, despite hearing of his reputation being torn to shreds in a Leavis lecture. The ageing Leavis is harangued by an agitprop student (it is 1969) who turns Leavis's star pupil against literature.

Criticism at its highest

form is at the basis of the whole notion of culture," Williams says.

The Last Romantics has

more than one strand, and an important thread is Leavis's relationship with his wife, the academic Q.D. (Queenie) Leavis. First seen as an earnest young blue stocking (Helga Brindle), she ages into a woman with the starved look of one who has fed only her mind.

Sara Kestelman, the older Queenie, gives her a vindictive intellectual passion, never

more satisfied than when putting a poem through the critical mincer.

Williams says the theme of marriage has a perennial fascination for him, none more so than those that are long-lived. The Leavis partnership survived 50 banting years. Between them, they influenced more than one generation and were described, disparagingly, as "a firm".

The villain of the piece is Williams's fictional protestant, the leather-jacketed Costain, played by Rufus Sewell, leader of the student demonstrators, who describes himself as a nihilist and whose aim is to destroy the English school system.

The passions are played out against the background of serene Cambridge cloisters, punts drifting along the banks and picnics in the meadows, all beautifully captured by director Jack Gold (of *The Naked Civil Servant* fame).

In the end, *The Last Romantics* is a story about teaching and being taught - the need of the pupil for the teacher and the teacher's need for the pupil. After all the arguements Leavis says simply: "I teach because I was taught."

CLARE COLVIN

pain and meaninglessness of real life into a "meaningful emotional experience".

Using a generous selection of clips, McKee reveals how lighting, editing and direction are deployed to "take you beyond the fear of death". The initiated will consider the result to be a statement of the obvious; others will feel the scales fall from their eyes.

However, there are bound to be those who accuse McKee of breaking the butterfly on the wheel. *Nightmare on Elm Street* will be shown immediately after the first programme, and *The Producers* immediately after the second. "The Anger of Comedy" So isn't he spoiling

the tricks, but he goes ahead and cites them anyway and he still knocks me over."

In a similar fashion, those of us who go to the cinema wanting to be scared wifless nevertheless sit in the dark, arms folded, defying the director to spook us.

"It is becoming more difficult to frighten audiences," McKee says. "Their increased sophistication forces the film-makers to be even more imaginative. *Cronenberg's Dead Ringers* is a good example."

The key to successful terror vision is to keep the fantasy grounded in reality. *Nightmare on Elm Street* takes place in sunny suburbia;

Fear flicks: Robert McKee

the surprise? Killing the joke? "I don't think so," McKee says. "The assumption is that anyone can make a genre movie, but this is not the case. Take *Blue Velvet*: I know the tricks. David Lynch knows

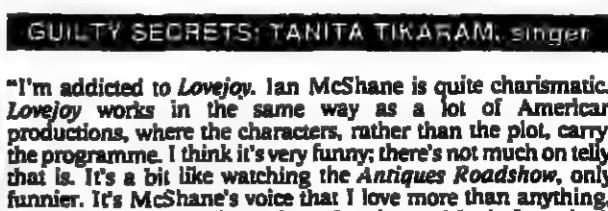
Alien, in McKee's words, figures a gang of "23rd century truck drivers".

Dread should not be signposted, but creep up with subtlety. "There's nothing new in this - look at Shakespeare's imagery of nets and traps in *Othello*, or the scandalous references in *Hamlet*. Sexuality is the universal poetic motif of horror."

"Alien" uses the same methods as *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*. It should be fun to spot the techniques.

"A simple idea strongly executed in a film like *Alien*, or Bergman's *Through a Glass Darkly* (the subject of the third programme), opens the door to uncountable interpretations, but if you try to cram everything into a movie it will collapse in on itself."

MARK SANDERSON



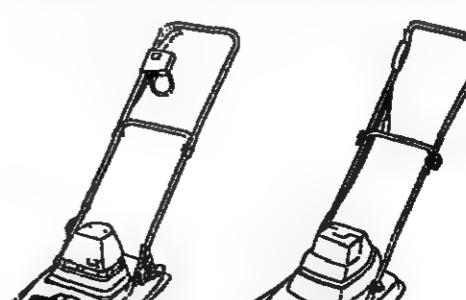
GUILTY SECRETS: TANITA TIKARAM, singer

"I'm addicted to *Lovejoy*. Ian McShane is quite charismatic. *Lovejoy* works in the same way as a lot of American productions, where the characters, rather than the plot, carry the programme. I think it's very funny; there's not much on telly that is. It's a bit like watching the *Antiques Roadshow*, only funnier. It's McShane's voice that I love more than anything, because it's so reassuring. I hope *Lovejoy* and *Lady Jane* don't get it together, because that would be really naff."

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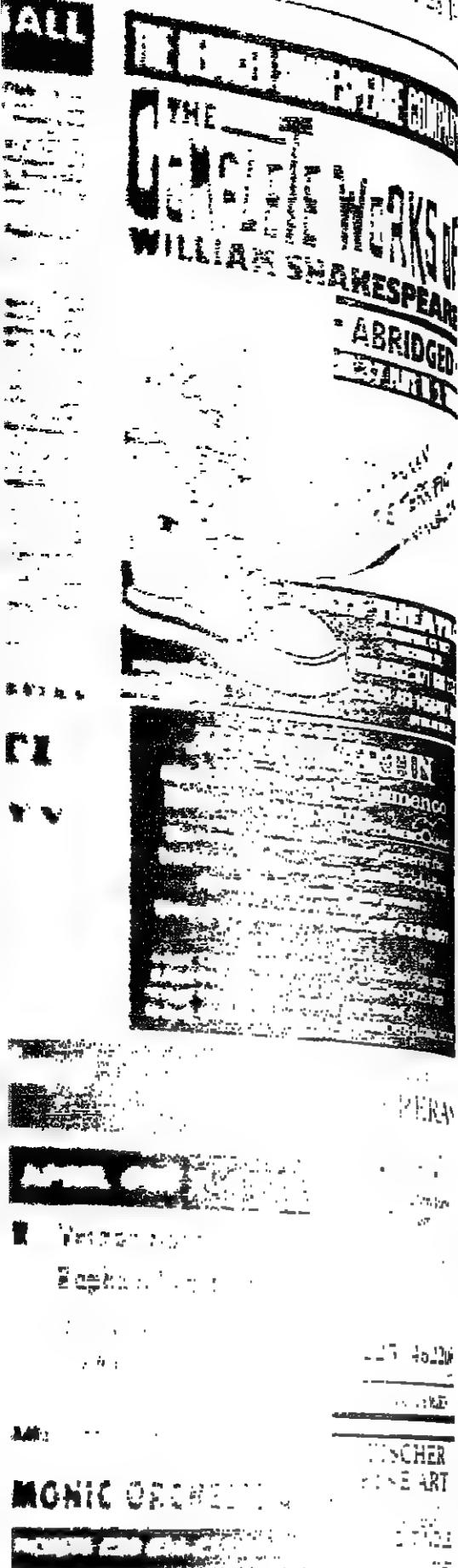
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When ringing please inform us of the date code number on your mower which will also be found on the rating plate. We have set up a Helpline manned 7 days a week (10am to 4pm) on (Freephone) 0800 252661 to take your call. Or simply contact your local Black & Decker Service Centre (see Yellow Pages for details). Your co-operation in this matter is appreciated.



SATURDAY MARCH 28 1992

ARTS

Reborn to run after leaving New Jersey

David Sinclair
reviews a brace of Bruce Springsteen albums, his first since he abandoned his blue-collar roots for Los Angeles

The myth of Bruce Springsteen has been all but blown to pieces. In the five years since he released his last album, *Tunnel of Love*, New Jersey's most famous son — adored for his songs emphasising the plain virtues and continuity of life in his native blue-collar community — has pulled up stakes and moved to a \$14 million estate in Beverly Hills.

The man whose music and lifestyle boasted an integrity which supposedly placed him above the grubby goings-on so depressingly typical of celebrity musicians, was depicted by the British tabloid newspapers as apparently two-timing his wife, whom he subsequently divorced. And the performer whose working practices have been built on longstanding foundations of loyalty dismissed the E Street Band.

That was the extraordinary team of musicians featuring saxophonist Clarence Clemons, which had given him a sterling service since the start of his career and played a key role in defining the Springsteen sound.

Unremarkable behaviour by the standards of most rock stars, perhaps, but among Springsteen's more obsessive fans a mood of disillusionment is abroad. In December *The Los Angeles Times* reported that subscriptions to the Seaside-based Springsteen fanzine, called *Backstreets*, were down by almost 65 per cent from a mid-Eighties high of 25,000. According to *Backstreets* editor Charles Cross: "In some very real ways, he is on trial. I don't think the American public is as forgiving of Bruce as Springsteen as they were in the Eighties."

Signs of self doubt

CONCERT

Brindisi Quartet
BBC Concert Hall

MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE used to be known as the chap who made all the loud noise: the opera *Greek*, the orchestral work (shortly to appear on an EMI CD single) *Three Screaming Popes*, and so on. But he seems to have consciously calmed his music down. His new string quartet called "Are you sure?" was given its world premiere between Mozart's D minor Quartet, K421 and Janáček's "Intimate Letters" by the excellent Brindisi Quartet before an invited radio audience on Wednesday.

What exactly is meant by its title remains as yet a mystery, since audiences at these concerts are not afforded the luxury of programme notes. But the beginning of the piece, a thoroughly romantic cadenza for first violin — beautifully played by Jacqueline Shave — immediately suggests indecision in its straightforward opposition of major and minor modes. It sets the scene for a work written in frankly and unexpectedly derivative, soft and touchingly sincere manner.

The most obvious models are Tippett's earlier quartets, suggested by the strongly linear writing and the harmonic and rhythmic language. But its ancestry possibly goes back further, to Dvořák. There is the same feeling of space, of free-ranging lyricism and of sheer richness.

Turnage is not afraid to make his phrases echo each other literally, to repeat an assertive rhythmic motif, or to use common or garden chordal progressions. And at the climax, quite possibly at the root of the single-movement piece, is something that sounds like a Negro spiritual coming sadly home to its rest.

Turnage has apparently been engaging in some tough self-questioning about how his music should be. It would be a pity if the influences apparent in this work were to preoccupy him for too long. He is at his best when he involves himself in tougher argument, challenging as well as beguiling his audience. Even though it contains beautiful things, this quartet swallowed rather than explored.

STEPHEN PETTITT

Norman and Sandra do it their way

THE theatre has heard little of Bernard Kops since the 1960s, when he was widely seen as the alternative Arnold Wesker, more impish and less earnestly ideological in his criticism of a bad world. Well, several novels and a couple of fringe shows later, he is back in the mainstream, still full of energy and with new targets in his sights. The world is now something to join, not shun; his subject, the kind of sloof, paranoid family whose members are dependent on each other and, almost worse, dependent on each other's dependence.

This family has been reduced to a brother and a sister, although the kisses and murmurs of "darling" at first suggest a more conventional emotional bond. It gradually emerges that Norman suffers from a blend of infantilism and agoraphobia, and that Sandra, who at least has a job outside, promised their parents she would live in perpetuity in their vast Streatham house, looking after him. They giggle, frolic, listen to their Sinatra records, and play a sort of private Mastermind in which Ole Blue Eyes is the specialist subject. That's to say, they are glued in a time-warp, and seem likely to stay that way.

But glue, time-warp and a smothering routine are not particularly dramatic commodities. The play needs tension, and finds some in Sandra's second, surreptitious life. While she continues to vow unchanging devotion

to Norman, and probably thinks she means it, she is making enquiries about house prices at the estate agents (and even acquiring the occasional admirer). One of these, an aspiring guru called Phillip, she proceeds to bring home and shower with her savings. Needless to say, that is not to the liking of a

play is too long and, in spite of a twist in the tail, rather predictable and repetitive as well. What carries it through is partly Kops's crisp, brisk dialogue, partly the calibre of Ted Craig's cast. Stefan Bednarczyk, playing Phillip, admittedly has little to do but spout New Age platitudes in the maddeningly bland, calm

tones of New Age sages. But Susan Brown deftly catches Sandra's frustration, and Ian Gelder's Norman brings a necessary danger to the proceedings. He suggests that this overage Billy Bunter, gurgling, flying into tantrums, then scuttling off to the kitchen like an alarmed beetle, would do anything to protect his creature comforts; and that keeps the audience's nerve-ends on edge too.

But what of Sinatra? Well, Kops tells us in the programme that his "subtle blend of despair and ridiculous optimism", his "humour, chutzpah and spraunch", his ability simultaneously to be "human, confident, fallible and lost" converted him. Kops, from an embattled, angry communist to the happy anarchist he now is. That strikes me as a bit over the top. But it is the sort of liberation that the old crooner is presumably meant to offer these trapped people too.

At any rate, *You Make Me Feel So Young, Fairy Tales Can Come True* and other such romantic numbers lazily drift across Michael Pavlinka's cluttered drawing-room set, with its dangling lamps and Warhol-like montages of Sinatra himself. They tantalise poor Sandra, work in ironic counterpoint to Norman's emotional stodginess — and, not least, give us in the audience a nice mini-concert, too.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

New York Theatre: Holly Hill reports on two musical successes and a revival that seems to have failed

Joy returns along with classic Gershwin songs

choreographer Susan Stroman suffuse the action with vitality and inventive touches that make the Gershwin songs (five from the original show, others folded in) seem like new. Classics include "Bidin' My Time", "Someone To Watch Over Me", "But Not For Me", and "Nice Work If You Can Get It". Robin Wagner's sets, William Ivey Long's costumes and Paul Gallo's lighting evoke New York glitter and Nevada desert, culminating in a stunning finale with an art deco background, the dancing sweethearts garbed like Fred and Ginger.

The Most Happy Fella is a

revival that began in Connecticut's Goodspeed Opera House

last summer. Its novelty is the absence of an orchestra; instead, arrangements that the composer Frank Loesser made for two pianos are used. The piano and absence of miked singing are wonderful in the intimate Booth Theatre.

Distinguishing this revival are director Gerald Gutierrez's daring choices for the leading roles. Tony, the fiflyish California farmer who sends the photo of his handsome foreman to woo a San Francisco waitress to become his mail-order bride, is played by Spiro Malas. He appears overweight, awkward, sweating and physically unappealing. The miracle of his performance is that Tony's sweet

soul gradually overcomes all, so that the audience can fall in love with him as does his bride.

Sophie Hayden is not the pretty ingenue usually hired for Rosalind but a showwoman young woman with no options left. Her surprise and gratitude at discovering kindness, friendship and then love are enormously touching. By the time that Malas and Hayden sing "My Heart Is So Full Of You", Loesser's melodic variation on the classic tale of Beauty and the Beast has woven its enduring magic.

Less luck for Tim Rice's

reworking of *Chess*, produced Off-Broadway by The Artists Perspective, a new group de-

voted to undiscovered or neglected musicals. Setting the action in 1972 during the Cold War, Rice has played down the political aspects and focuses on American Freddy and Russian Anatoly, both obsessed with chess.

New York critics were almost as unkind to the reworking as to the Broadway *Chess*, not even giving minimal credit to the score as a great showcase for musical theatre singers — in this production Kathleen Rowe McAllen as Florence, J. Mark McVey as Anatoly, Ray Walker as Freddy, and Jan Horvath in the expanded role of Svetlana.

Casting my vote on the three versions of *Chess*, I opt for London's physical production (especially the opening chess ballet), the love story and the original trio of actors on Broadway, and the mostly sung-through streamlining of Rice's new book.

And his mother came on, too

DANCE

Modern Masterpiece
Nottingham

an attack on the music, or on the original ballet's social assumptions. Perhaps it is just Clark's little joke, like his following "Send in the Clowns" solo, danced neutrally in front of an enlargement of the *Mona Lisa*.

Julie Hood, a faithful Clark interpreter in fine form, is the fourth dancer, and Clark's mother (aged 68) makes a decidedly startling appearance as the Elder. Leigh Bowery's costumes have some witty touches (even the lavatory seats worn as collars in one sequence) and his own on-stage interventions are kept within bounds except for one pointless obscenity.

Perhaps Clark is pointing a parallel between the aggressive figure of Stravinsky 80 years ago and the similar quality in today's pop music. The irreverent rudeness and energy of Clark's work appeal to a young audience nourished on pop videos; but he also has an originality and inventiveness rare in choreography. A potent mixture.

JOHN PERCIVAL



Michael Clark: never a blushing violet



Featured on guitar: Bruce Springsteen during his last British tour, in 1988

dream. In "Local Hem" he takes a wry tilt at the impossible extremes of adulation and antipathy which a performer at his level has to face: "First they made me the king then they made me pope/Then they brought the rope."

A string of warm, idealised love songs is interrupted by a desert-baked. By Cooder-ish

number called "The Big Mud", Springsteen again displays his previously unsuspected reserves as a guitarist. But his skill and honesty as a writer and performer continue to shine through in his music, regardless. If any of his fans are foolish enough to desert him over these two albums, it is they who will be the losers.

But he subverts this by gestures such as clutching his crotch in apparent desire, and by having Joanne Barret paint on a Hitler moustache and slanting lock of hair for her tumultuously powerful solo as the Sacrifice. This crescendo of painful feeling and overwhelming energy rightly brought cheers from an excited audience.

This Hitler allusion may be

Tales of nymphs and shepherds

OPERA

Il pastor fido
RCOM

There were, however, one or two nice touches, as when the scheming nymph, Eurilia (played by Marianne Hellgren) threw off her fake mourning robes to dance a little jig of triumph. Her short-lived victory is that of consigning her rival, Amarilli, to execution for loving illicit love in the face of a stern decree.

The Act III duet for Amarilli and her lover, Mirello, sung under the shadow of the axe, is one of the highlights of the work. It brought together the two most promising singers of this cast, Jill-Maria Marsden and Marie Vassilou, both moulding their phrases to expressive effect and thoroughly at home in the style.

Judy Slaters also deserves an honorable mention for her Dorinda. Her performance was not least impressive in the moving aria she sings after having the misfortune to be shot with an arrow fired by the man she lusts after.

The first of the four performances — the run ends tonight — was conducted by Denis Darlow. His brisk tempi and taut rhythms give the show such momentum as it has.

BARRY MILLINGTON



Trapped in a time warp: Susan Brown and Ian Gelder



Winning Spiro Malas in *The Most Happy Fella*

Blasts from the past

Jonathan
Meades
revisits
two ageing

London beauties
and finds them
distinctly faded

In the mid 1970s I saw Sir Alec Guinness consummately evoke bitterly cold weather and the prospect of having to go outside into frost and a nor'easter that would hammer a head. He achieved this with a gesture of extraordinary economy, wrapping a scarf around his neck with a mix of resignation and derring do. This was in Julian Mitchell's adaptation of *Wyndham's A Family and a Fortune* at some theatre on Shaftesbury Avenue.

In the mid 1980s I saw Sir John Gielgud consummately evoke what it is to have lunched very well. Again economy was the key, and a single-mindedness of purpose. But whereas Sir Alec was fleet, understated, naturalistic, Sir John was more classically historic, more actorish. He was called upon to move from the door of a restaurant to the door of a waiting Rolls Royce. Walk is not the right word — he made a progress, stately and contented and very grand indeed. The progress spoke not only of a fine lunch but of a fine lunch taken in another era — wherever it was that elegance was paramount and time of no importance. This was not in a theatre, this was in the four yards between L'Etoile and the kerb of Charlotte Street's pavement in Fitzrovia or North Soho or whatever it's presently called. Like most people, I suspect, I had not previously associated Sir John with street theatre, but his *pièce d'œuvre* rendering of *The Sybarites' Procession To His Chariot* (Lord Leighton will do the painting) made me think again.

It also made me think that L'Etoile must be something really very special. Though I guess that the idea of the place rather than its putative actuality was more potent, more appealing. I suspect now that L'Etoile itself agrees. Each table is provided with a brochure boasting about its illustrious past, its patrons, its longevity — né 1904. Look up from the bathos of the brochure and what do you find? You find an aged gaity girl of a restaurant, paint slumped across the cracks, gamely refusing to give in to seediness but reluctant to have a full face-job. You find a few half-fallen business men. You find a load of maroon. Indeed amateurs of all maroon's gradations will find L'Etoile most satisfying: the source of the colour (maroon, chestnut) may be absent but there's a vinous cum cherry lusciousness, there's



the claret patterned carpet, there are the waiters' jackets. All the glasses and soft furnishings have, it goes without saying, seen better days. Then there's the wine itself. That's maroon too: mostly French, posh bottles a speciality, not over-priced, though many birds not available. Non maroon items include, as well as white wine, a glass screen etched with champagne bottles in buckets, a wrought metal object which holds 150 centilitres — Le double size — bottles of alcohol blancs, a bar with a nest of grubby wire baskets on it. The trolleys are brown — of course there are trolleys, 1904 is not summed up, but 1954 is.

It's more difficult to put a date on the style of cooking — a throwback, certainly, but to when? And to where? I suppose the same date will do — mid 1950s. Mendes-France's France. What L'Etoile offers is a version of pre-nouvelle French restaurant cuisine — perhaps, equally, in finesse, if not in repertoire. It's skin to solid British provincial hotel cooking of a slightly later period. It does this cooking competently. Tripe à la mode de Caen — an uncharacteristically bourgeois item — are not bad at all. Tournedos is respectable meat, served with the world's worst garnish of a crenelated, half-roasted tomato, decent pommes aluminous and ineffable sauté potatoes. Scallops are done in fish-pie white sauce,

with browned mash, in the shell. Modern cooking, *pace* Sir Kingsley Amis who is an assiduous plunger of the place, is so much better. The first courses from one of the squad of trolleys were the sorts of dish that brain-dead girls who have not secured royal or at least titled husbands might serve at ambitious dinner parties — poached salmon mixed up with spud, mayonnaise, vorts: dressed crab; kipperish herrings in olive oil. The cheeses are poor — industrialised last-grocery that anyone in central London can not only avoid but must make a special effort to find. The waiters are by Otto Dix. Tip generously out of guilt.

At the end of their dinner at the next table to us in L'Epicure the father of a French family said to his wife and daughters: "OK. On va manger dans un restaurant français." I have not made this up. My wife will bear witness. Most of the seats in this other blast from the past were occupied by a Spanish party. No wonder the rest of Europe still believes that London eats disgusting.

Two doors from L'Etoile is Richard Neat's Pied à Terre. A hundred yards from L'Epicure is Alastair Little's restaurant. Both are cheaper than L'Etoile or L'Epicure. Their waiting staffs are not dressed in stained nylon. Mr Neat and Mr

Little have all the culinary gifts. Their food is fresh. They do not take short-cuts. But they are not part of the system. Perhaps they have only themselves to blame for not greasing porters and hotel desks for not getting the right side of the despicable English Tourist Board into whose Paris office a friend of mine wandered a couple of years ago and was offered a list of London restaurants that would have been *vieux jeu* in 1975.

L'Epicure was probably among them. Its exterior is terrific: 12 feet above the ground, four tall torches, horizontal in a good night wind. They're gay (old sense); they carry no Nuremberg stern. They're not so fine as an advertisement as Sir John Gielgud but they are always there. The interior is cosy. The waiters wear maroon or black. Most of them are played by Peter Lorre. Their portraits is Otto Dix's greater contemporary Christian Schad — though if there was a Schad today, in London, he would not be looking here for his subjects.

L'Epicure doesn't really have anything much to do with London in the 1990s. It belongs to the parallel city of polyglot coach tours, Big Ben, the Tower of London (dig those crazy ravens). There are some good wines including a Bandol called Château de Pibarou whose 1985 vintage is worth a try. There is a daily menu of things such as duck confit with lentils and lamb rack.

But they're beside the point — which is old Soho International Cooking. Asparagus with Hollandaise is perfect. Harengs à la suédoise comprises two sorts of off the peg herring, one sweet, the other salt, neither much cop — loads of garnish though and a glass of caraway-flavoured spirit thrown in. Beef stroganoff and lobster Newburg — the meat and the crustacean are brought from the kitchen for inspection before they're cooked. When served to you, transformed, they're both pretty terrible: greasy meat, heavy fish. It's as though they'd been curried without spices.

Coffee is served in a stupidly fancy retort. There were slip-ups in the service — e.g. the delivery of the wrong sort of spinach (leaf rather than creamed) — which were not worth complaining about. By some miracle the cheeses appear to be supplied by the naff corner shop that does L'Etoile's. Every strawberry served from the sweet trolley is what the legendary Jules Lagrange would call a Bardolph's Nose.

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KIND FOOD: ALISON JOHNSON

Unfair deal for mothers

MOTHERING Sunday is coming up. The human mother has at least some chance of having her wishes about how and where she gives birth respected, but what of the chances of farm animal mothers?

The answer is dismal, and getting worse. Since a proper understanding of selective breeding arose in the 18th century, animals have been profitably only precisely because their breeding is managed on "sausage machine" principles, producing a maximum number of meaty offspring in strictly controlled situations.

But during the last few decades things have deteriorated rapidly to a stage where acceptance must be questioned. Not only can the battery hen no longer rear chicks, she cannot lay her eggs in privacy, or brood them, even for a minute. The dairy cow is parted from her calf after a few days. The sow is confined before farrowing to weaning in a metal cage where she cannot turn or reach her piglets.

Curiously, two people in the past week have told me that this farrowing pen is humane, because it prevents the sow accidentally crushing her piglets and therefore saves lives. I would say, rather, that it saves bacon — profits.

Even if you feel these routine abuses are justified by the need to save farming incomes and to feed the country cheaply, it is hard to accept the way profitable animal breeding is heading.

The British Veterinary Association's Council asked recently: "Why is it that we subject an animal to a procedure to make it breed the way we want it to breed rather than in the way it is totally capable of breeding?" They were referring to embryo transfer: the practice of implant-



Mother's Day ice cream treat
serves 6
2-3 heaped tsp instant coffee
3tsp sugar
2tbsp brandy (optional)
large packet (300g) ginger
nurs or crunchy biscuits
500ml ice cream — mother's
favourite flavour

Put coffee and sugar in a mug and fill it halfway with hot water. Stir to dissolve. Add brandy if used. Find a loaf tin 23cm x 12cm or an 18cm cake tin. Dip each biscuit in coffee mixture while you count to three and place in the tin to cover the bottom and sides. Put ice cream in the middle and cover with more dipped biscuits. Freeze for at least one hour. To turn out, dip the bottom of the tin in warm water for ten seconds.

Burgundy's bumper crops

New stocks are now
available of this
century's greatest
vintage. Buy now is
Jane MacQuitty's
recommendation

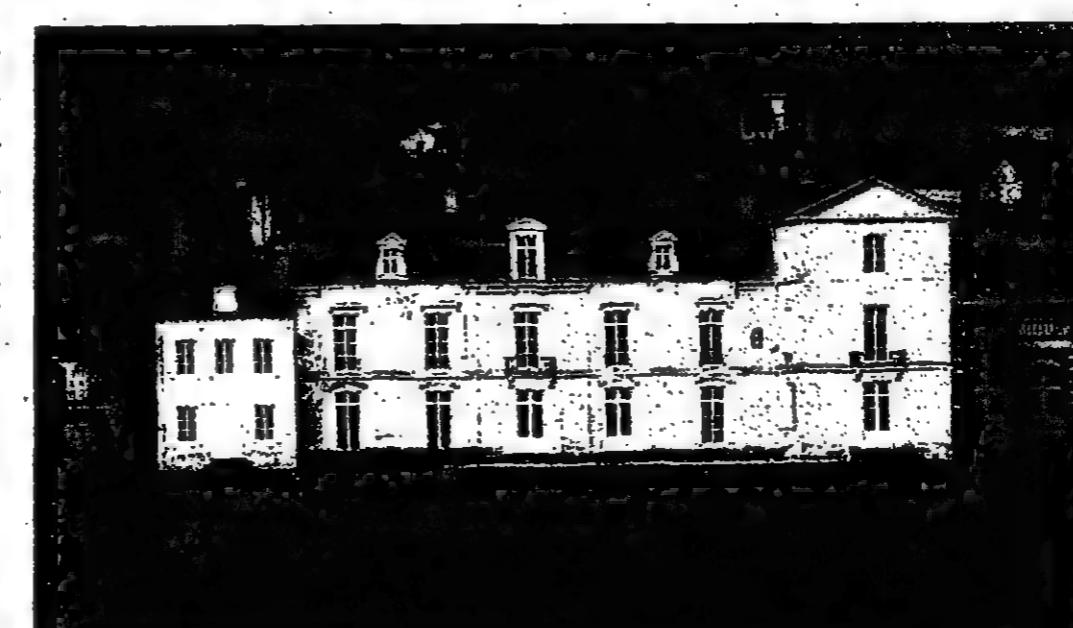
The jury is still out as to whether the exceptional 1990 red burgundy vintage is finer than that of the magnificent 1988s. The 1990s' claim to greatness, just like that of the 1988s, is not in doubt. Wine traders on both sides of the Channel are convinced that they are dealing with a first-class, once-in-a-lifetime vintage. I am, too.

What is in question is which vintage has the edge: the classic 1988s or the rare 1990s? Britain's burgundy specialists are already equally divided between the two. The Wine Society puts the 1990s just ahead. Master of Wine Adam Bancroft says it is the best of the four fine vintages of the previous decade, and Bibendum rates it as the best since 1978; only Justerini & Brooks and Domaine Direct, it seems, feel that the quality of the 1988 reds make it the better year.

When I first wrote about the 1990 burgundies in January, only two merchants in Britain had the vintage. Now, three more have just released the top wines listed right. They are not in abundant supply, so my advice to burgundy lovers is to buy now at the *en primeur*, or early, still-in-cask stage while there are still stocks of these first-class reds about.

But what is all the fuss about? Why cannot Burgundy have produced two truly great vintages so close together? For a start, the unique and fragile combination of the right climate, soil, grape variety and winemaker happens on average, about once every four years. It is just not possible in Burgundy's cool, northern climate, unlike in Bordeaux, to produce great wines every year.

Also the 1988 and 1990 red burgundies are quite different.



Rich pickings: the Meursault vineyard and château in Burgundy is at the heart of the Côte de Beaune

and finesse. 1990, by comparison, is a freak year. This was the vintage that the Wine Society buyers dubbed an enigma and took three visits to Burgundy to sort out.

Unlike the 1988s traditional style and flavours, the tiny, super-ripe, thick-skinned 1990 pinot noir grapes produced fresh wines with intense, extra ripe, concentrated fruit and high alcohol levels, yet with the necessary under-pinnings for balance of tannin and acidity.

Instead of the classic pinot noir taste of cherry, plum and damson, the 1990s' taste of extra ripe, black fruit flavours like blackcurrant and blackberry.

At times, too, the top 1990s are so rich and heady in flavour that they remind me of *crème de mûre*, or cassis, blackberry or blackcurrant liqueur. Quite heady in my experience, from a region renowned for its pale, delicate red wines.

For once, Burgundy's annual harvest problem of excessively high yields diluting the quality, was not in the 1990 picture. The vintage did produce a large crop, but so concentrated and fruit-filled were the grapes, without being jammy, that even higher yielding pinot noir

vines still had the ability to produce great wine.

Pascal Marchand, from the distinguished Clos des Epeneaux estate in Pommard, was able to make as much as 46 hectolitres of great wine in 1990, compared to his usual 35 in 1988. Even 1990's humble burgogne rouge wines produced at the better estates — which are usually made from lesser vines and parcels of vines — are often first class and represent extraordinarily good value for money.

Indeed, the Wine Society's buyers went so far as to compare the best burgogne rouge, domaine-bottled wines with the second wines of classed growth Bordeaux châteaux.

Getting to grips with the remarkable 1990s has a lot to do with understanding the year's weather pattern. After a mild winter and early, warm spring — encouraging rapid and very abundant vine growth — came the hot and not unexpected early, dry summer. Rain early on eased the drought but, happily, the long, uneven flowering tempered yields and ensured a later harvest.

Only a decade or slightly less in the cellar will tell whether the 1990 reds will triumph over the 1988s. My own hunch is that the classic 1988s will have the edge.

Having said that, there is plenty of vintage evidence in Bordeaux and Burgundy, where freak years like 1945 and 1947 turned out to be the vintages of the century. Despite the general agreement among the Burgundians about the *lack d'âge* qualities of the 1991 vintage, prices are still appealingly low for the 1990s' down to the same level as the 1988 reds.

For once the recession cloud here and in France has a silver lining.

Best buys

• 1990 Aunay Duresses, Claude Maréchal Lea & Sandeman, 301 Fulham Road, SW10, £78. Not the best value bottle from Monsieur Maréchal, but an impressive chunky, blackberry and redcurrant mouthful all the same.

• 1990 Pommard, Clos des Epeneaux, 1er Cru, Comte Armand, Lea & Sandeman, £20. Intense, intoxicating, spicy cassis and blackberry flavours stemming from new oak and an ultra-ripe year make this one of the best.

• 1990 Bourgogne Crûe, Clément Adam Bancroft, 4-7 Great Pulteney Street, W1, £58. Elegant, beefy-savoury flavours backed up by ripe, sweet, almost glycerine-like fruit.

• 1990 Côte de Nuits Villages, Bertrand Ambroise Adam Bancroft, £73. Massive, silky-spicy style at a keen price.

• 1990 Gevrey-Chambertin, Estournelle St Jacques, 1er Cru, E. Esmonin, £15. Delicious sweet, ripe, blackberry and damson fruit coupled with the scent of roses and a very dark colour put Esmonin at the top of the 1990 class.

• 1990 Bourgogne Rouge, Jean-Philippe Fichet Morris & Verdin, 28 Churton Street, SW1, £51. Plummy, morello and black cherry fruit mark another success for this humble appellation.

• 1990 Bourgogne Rouge, Les Bons Bâtards, Patrice & Michèle Rion Morris & Verdin, £57. Made from the Rions' own vines, not the family domaine's, this wonderful blackcurrant and blackberry-packed wine effortlessly demonstrates 1990's finesse.

• 1990 Vosne Romanée, Les Beaux Monts, 1er Cru, Domaine Rion Morris & Verdin, £217. Deep, purple black colour supported by lovely cassis, strawberry and blackberry fruit. A winner.

• 1990 Nuits St Georges, Clos des Argillières, 1er Cru, Domaine Rion Morris & Verdin, £217. Sandalwood, spice, cassis and strawberries combine to make this one of my favourite 1990s.

Prices quoted for these en primeur (still in cask) burgundies are per case in bond in London. Expect to pay duty, VAT and carriage.

Cheese st
reluctant

Hedge and field fare

Frances Bissell, The Times cook, roots about for fresh and green country surprises

Recently I was sent a book which reminded me that spring is a good time to go foraging for wild shoots and leaves, to be picked for the soup pot and salad bowl, and flowers for glorious confections.

Suffolk Farm Feasts is published by the Suffolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, whose aim is to promote practical conservation on farmland and in the countryside (available from Julie Hawkins, FWAG, c/o Maff, 100 Southgate, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP3 2BD, £6.50 plus £1 post and packing).

When foraging, it is important to avoid trespassing, to tread carefully and to pick leaves, flowers or shoots sparingly so that the plant colonies are not threatened by over-picking. It is illegal to pick rare or protected plants. Other species may not be uprooted without the permission of the landowner.

That said, however, many of the best plants for eating, such as dandelions, docks, hawthorn and elder, grow in relative profusion. Only pick what you can be absolutely certain of identifying, well away from roadside verges and recently sprayed areas, and in any case wash your pickings well before cooking or eating raw.

It should be noted that certain plants derive their flavour from substances which, if taken in large quantity, may be harmful. Wood sorrel, for example, contains oxalic acid, which inhibits absorption of magnesium and calcium.

Hawthorn buds are among the first of the green things to pick. I can remember picking and eating them as "bread and cheese" on our way to school in Yorkshire. Dorothy Hartley's *Food in England* suggests mixing them with freshly made potato salad or beetroot salad. If the season is already well advanced in your part of the country, other wild greens can be substituted in the steamed pudding, as can chopped watercress for a very well-flavoured pudding.

Wild greens have a strong flavour, which I like to match with rice or pasta. Much chewier than a real risotto made with rice, the barley risotto is, nevertheless, a very good dish, inexpensive and sustaining. Mix the leaves, too, in a sharp, cleansing salad; dandelion, chicory, chickweed, plantain leaves, hawthorn, Good King Henry, watercress and Jack-by-the-Hedge can all be used.

I like to make the dressing with walnut or extra virgin olive oil and lemon or lime juice. A few crushed walnuts can be added if using walnut oil.

If, by chance, you have sown a wild flower patch in your garden, many of them can be turned into scented and coloured sugars for use in confectionery, particularly the violets, primroses and cowslips. The tiny wild pansy (or heartsease) makes a pretty addition to the wild green salad bowl, and violet leaves can also be used, cooked or in salads.

All the recipes can be adapted to the more domestic ingredients, since I have chosen ones that act as a vehicle to carry other flavours and ingredients: frittatas, fritters, risottos, tarts and steamed puddings.

First prepare the greens as

described. Chop them and put to one side. Gently fry the onion in half the butter and the oil and stir in the barley. Add half the wine and stir until absorbed, then add the rest and cook until it, too, has been absorbed. Continue then with the vegetable stock, adding a little at a time, stirring from time to time. After adding two or three batches of stock, stir in the greens and continue cooking until the barley is tender. Season to taste. When ready to serve, stir in the remaining butter and the parmesan.

grated parmesan, crumbled blue cheese or diced mozzarella. Diced potatoes, fried in the pan before the greens, will garnish this into a more substantial dish.

Another way of using eggs and greens is to line a flan ring with short pastry, parbake it blind, and when cool, put cooked greens in the bottom and pour well-seasoned, beaten eggs and milk over them before baking the tart.

Wild greens and barley risotto (serves 4 to 6)

1lb/455g prepared greens, such as nettles, Jack-by-the-Hedge, hogweed, Fat Hen, elder, stems, ground elder, chickweed
1 small onion or 2 shallots, peeled and chopped
2oz/60g butter
2tbsp olive oil
12oz/340g pearl barley
0.5pt/280ml white wine, boiling
1.5pt/850ml vegetable stock, boiling
salt
pepper
freshly grated parmesan cheese

Chop the greens, and gently fry them for a few minutes in the oil and butter in an omelette pan. Lightly beat the eggs, with a little pepper, and pour over the greens. When the underside is set, turn the frittata over and cook briefly on the other side before sliding it on to a warm serving plate. Cheese can also be added to the beaten egg.

In France and Belgium, dandelion is cultivated as a salad vegetable and often blanched to a spindly yellow plant. It is a favourite bistro

Wilted dandelion salad (serves 4)

1lb/455g prepared greens, such as nettles, Jack-by-the-Hedge, hogweed, Fat Hen, elder, stems, ground elder, chickweed
1 small onion or 2 shallots, peeled and chopped
2oz/60g butter
2tbsp olive oil
12oz/340g pearl barley
0.5pt/280ml white wine, boiling
1.5pt/850ml vegetable stock, boiling
salt
pepper
freshly grated parmesan cheese

Wilt the leaves in several changes of warm water and dry them in a salad spinner or clean tea towel. Place in the salad bowl. Fry the bacon until crisp and crumble over the salad. Pour the hot fat over the leaves and mix well, seasoning with pepper. Deglaze the frying pan with a splash of vinegar and stir in to the salad. Serve immediately before the bacon fat has had time to congeal.

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Elderflower cordial (serves 4)

1lb/455g prepared greens, such as nettles, Jack-by-the-Hedge, hogweed, Fat Hen, elder, stems, ground elder, chickweed
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In France and Belgium, dandelion is cultivated as a salad vegetable and often blanched to a spindly yellow plant. It is a favourite bistro

Elderflower cordial (serves 4)

1lb/455g prepared greens, such as nettles, Jack-by-the-Hedge, hogweed, Fat Hen, elder, stems, ground elder, chickweed
1 small onion or 2 shallots, peeled and chopped
2oz/60g butter
2tbsp olive oil
12oz/340g pearl barley
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1.5pt/850ml vegetable stock, boiling
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Farmers are planting a valuable new crop: animal attractions for the youngsters. Lee Rodwell reports.

Cashing in down on the farm

If Old McDonald was around today he'd probably be running a Farm Attraction. There would be trailer rides and displays of old farm machinery, farmhouse teas, and sheep shearing to an animal chorus of moo-moos and oink-oinks.

Surveys suggest that more than a third of Britain's farmers have developed some form of non-agricultural business, and a growing number are beginning to think of visitors as another cash crop.

"There's been a lot of copy-cating," Delwyn Mathew of the West Country Tourist Board says. "We joke that you can't talk about rare breeds any more because they are becoming so common."

Even so, he admits that a professionally run farm attraction can offer good value as a family day out.

The young visitors at the White Post Modern Farm Centre in Nottinghamshire would no doubt agree. If they had time to think about it between oohing and aahing at the chicks, feeding the kid goats, stroking the piglets, meeting Lionel the llama and watching the inhabitants of the farmyard mousetown.

White Post Farm is open all year, and even on a chilly March Sunday can attract 1,500 visitors. The man behind the centre is farmer's son Tim Clark, who has turned what used to be his father's pigsty and 15 acres of farmland into an award-winning tourist attraction.

"Children like to get close to animals," he says, "and it's an opportunity for them to learn about modern farming in a way that's fun. Even children who grow up on the farms may not know about different animals, because their farm is all arable, or all pigs or all dairy cattle."

Mr Clark knows the importance of the "sah" factor. The 8,000-egg incubator is always working and the day-old chicks, quail or ducklings never fail to delight. He also keeps Dorset sheep because they breed throughout the year.

Godstone Farm in Surrey is in its twelfth year as an "educational" farm. Richard Oatway, the farm

manager, says: "The children may have read about farm animals, even seen them on television, but it's different when they can touch them. And they are often amazed by all the noises the lambs bleating, the ducks quacking."

Families looking for something rather more exotic than ordinary cows, pigs or sheep should head for a farm specialising in rare breeds. At Rare Farm Animals of Hollanden in Kent, Brian Brooks has devoted 100 acres of his 480-acre farm to a wide range of such animals. He reels off an impressive list: "We have Eriskay ponies, Exmoors, mini-Shetlands—they're great characters. We've got White Park cattle, short-leg Dexters and Belted Welsh Highland cattle. Portland sheep, grey-faced Dartmoors and Castle Milk Moors—they're my favourites, like peas in a pod. As for pigs, there are Tamworths and Middle White Berkshires and Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs."

Rare Farm Animals was set up in 1985. "We've been going so long now that the animals we have now were babies here. So they got used to people from day one," Mr Brooks says. As a result, it's not unusual for visitors to witness dramatic moments, such as the time one of the mares foaled on a Sunday afternoon. "There must have been 400 people applauding every stage," he says. "And when the foal staggered to its feet they all clapped. Goodness knows what the mare made of it all."

Not all farms are in the country. There are about 60 city farms dotted around Britain, flourishing on what was once derelict land. In London there are a dozen, including those in Hackney, Battersea, Kentish Town, Shoreditch, Stepney and the Isle of Dogs.

College Farm in Finchley, north London, is the nearest purpose-built farm to the centre of London. Set up more than 100 years ago by Express Dairies as a showcase dairy farm, it is leased by Richard and Jane Owen from the Department



Cheep day out: a young visitor makes friends at the White Post Farm centre in Nottinghamshire

of Transport, which bought the land for a road-widening scheme. "We originally set up as a riding stable," Mrs Owen says, "but we had some sheep and goats of our own. Local schools kept asking if they could come and visit so eventually we dropped the riding and set up as a farm centre."

College Farm is open all year, but on the first Sunday of every month the Owens hold a country fair, with entertainments including donkey and cart rides, arts and crafts, refreshments and competitions. This month there was an added

attraction: one of the sows produced a litter of seven piglets. "People were fascinated," Mr Owen says. "They'd stay to watch for a bit then wander off for a while before coming back to see how many more had been born. Only a farm can offer that kind of magic."

• Farmers in some areas have linked up to promote farm attractions: leaflets are available from the Nottinghamshire Farm Tourism Group (0623 822977). Open every day from April until the end of Sept, 10.30am-5pm. Godstone Farm, Tilbury Hill, Godstone, Surrey (0833 742546); open now until the end of Oct, 10am-5pm.

SAS to: The National Federation of City Farms, Avon Environmental Centre, Junction Road, Bristol BS4 3JP.

• College Farm, 45 Fazlani Road, London NS (081-349 0690); open all year, 10am-5pm. White Post Modern Farm Centre, Farmsgate, Notts (0623 829277); open all year Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm; Sat, Sun and bank holiday Mons 10am-5pm. Rare Farm Animals of Hollanden, Mill Lane, Hildenborough, near Sevenoaks, Kent (0732 832276); open every day from April until the end of Sept, 10.30am-5pm. Godstone Farm, Tilbury Hill, Godstone, Surrey (0833 742546); open now until the end of Oct, 10am-5pm.

Events

LONDON

• Room room: Lively concert for seven to 11-year-olds, with John Harle on saxophone and clarinet, accompanied by John Lenehan on piano. A fresh approach to music from Bach to Duke Ellington. Purcell Room, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 8800). Today 3pm. £1.

Child £1.20.

• Maudstone in spring: Though essentially for adult gardeners who can meet experts, take tours, listen to talks and watch flower arranging demonstrations, children will enjoy a visit to the beautiful Kentish castle. Leeds Castle, Maidstone, Kent (0622 765400). Today-April 5. 11am-5pm. £6.20, child £4.20.

• Poole show: First of the Easter children's shows is *The Enchanted Lamp*, the story of Aladdin presented by Lambeth Children's Theatre Company, using shadows, masks, life-size puppets. Recommended ages from five to 11. Poole Children's Theatre, 240 The Broadway, SW19 0JN (0181-543 4838). Today and next Sat, 2pm and 4pm. £4.50.

• Stay light: "Things to do and see in the dark"—a talk about red giants, black holes and blue stragglers by David Malin, from the Anglo-Australian observatory. London Transport Museum, Exhibition Road, SW7. Further information on 071-928 8080. Tomorrow 2pm. Lecture free: museum £3.50, child £1.75.

• Fairy tales: The Jasmin Puppets present *The Enchanted Swan*, the story of a crazy fish who wants to be a landlubber as well as an amphibian, and the bird which helps him in his dilemma. Tricycle Theatre, 269 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (071-328 1000). Today 1.30pm and 2pm. £3.75, child £1.75.

• London street: Easter

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• NATIONWIDE

• Keighley coosies: A Mothering Sunday event with a "skip up" afternoon tea and small gift for mothers, plus a special menu for children, who will also be able to make presents of cards and posies. East Riddlesden Hall, Bradford Road, Keighley, W. Yorks (0535 607075). Tomorrow 2-4pm. £6.

• Arundel outings: Children can see courting ducks, geese and swans, look at the new Antarctica photographic exhibition, be given a bunch of daffodils for their mothers.

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Mill Road, Arundel, West Sussex (0932 883355). Tomorrow 9.30am-5pm. £3.50, child £1.75.

• Bristol choral: The City's Junior Choir celebrates its tenth anniversary in a concert with the Bristol Chamber Choir, featuring the premiere of *Four Lirical Songs*, a light-hearted work by Andrew Tyrell. The groups will also sing family favourites from Purcell to present-day composers. St Georges, Brandon Hill, Bristol (0222 230359). Thurs, 7.30pm. £3.50, child/student £2.

JUDY FROSHAUG

YESTERDAY

• Singletons past: Mothering Sunday at the open air museum. Lots of different historic buildings for children to explore. Free entry and a bunch of flowers for mothers taking their children.

Wield and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, Chichester, W. Sussex (0243 63348). Tomorrow, £3.60, child £1.75, family ticket £9.

• Skipton steam: Trains decorated with flowers, and small gifts for mothers taking their children for a ride on this attractive railway.

Embsay Steam Railway, Embsay, Skipton, N. Yorks (0756 794727). Tomorrow. Trains hourly 11am-4pm. £2.50, child £1.20.

• Totnes ramble: Older children with an interest in the environment should enjoy this walk along the river Dart with Mike Maisin, a river warden. Dress suitably; take a packed lunch.

Meet at the Old Bridge, Totnes, Devon (01803 60603). Tues, 10.30am, return by 3.30pm. £1, child 50p.

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Why the lambs and I are getting high on grass

I have contracted an infectious disease. I have grave suspicions that I caught it from the sheep. The symptoms are disturbing: you suddenly find yourself walking with a jaunty gait as if everything were well with the world; a song forms on your lips and a smile appears on your face where all winter has been a weary frown. Instead of worrying about what disasters may befall the budding crops, you see only how well the land looks, how straight the furrows. Songwriters would call it love; but the sheep and I know it is something different.

It is nothing to do with the weather. In fact, after a deliciously mild spell we are once again raked by icy northerly winds. But an unmistakable feeling of elation is on us.

The sheep sensed it a couple of weeks before I did; and the little lambs sniffed it even before their experienced mothers. Yet it took

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

two days of liberation from the lambing-pens before the symptoms first appeared. Sheep do not like change, and even though they were freed from the enclosure of the farmyard and put out to grass, they still bleated pitifully to be brought home at night in the hope that delicious food might be laid before them in troughs. But lying at their feet was a rich feast, finer than any bucket could carry. The spring grass was shooting forth with vigour, packed with nourishment, if only they realised it. It would have been easy to have succumbed to their pleadings and brought them home had I not remembered a great truth: I discovered tucked away in a shepherd's memoirs, "Sheep," he said, "are not stupid. They just need time to think." So I

gave them time, and soon they were tucking in enthusiastically.

The effect of the grass on the lambs was dramatic. Made healthily plump by a rush of revitalised milk, they bounded round the field as if propelled by elastic bands. First they ran this way and that, then, presumably having had time to think about it, decided it would be more fun to run a race. So began the Lambs' Grand National, which seems to have its starting line near the trough and finishes eight acres away near the gate. Some just ran, others leapt along like liberated kangaroos and others, drunk on mothers' milk, flung themselves into the air with such vigour that they landed facing the other way and fled backwards. It took them a



long time to think that one out. But my own feeling of well-being comes as much from the look of the land as from the antics of the lambs. We are now beginning our second full year and all the plans we have worked so hard to accomplish

are gradually paying off. Like the meadow on which the lambs frolic, I sowed the seed this time last year and watched its feeble attempts to grow as it took successive assaults from frost and, worse, drought. It never really grew at all last sum-

mer, merely raising sad wisps of fragile green that were never destined to flourish. The weakness of the grass was matched only by the strength of the weeds, and by the middle of the year I had a fine meadow of thistles, poppies, nettles and docks. But no grass.

I was on the point of giving up, ploughing the field, and consigning the notion of organic growing to the back-burner. After all, had I wanted to apply chemicals to kill the weeds and fertilise the grass, I could easily have done so. Instead, I took advice from one of my aged farming textbooks and merely took the mower to it. The horses and I dragged that rickety old mower up and down for the best part of two days and then turned our backs on the field, not even bothering to clear what we had cut. The weeds once more took hold, the grass maintained its modesty. I checked the textbooks once again and when the horses gave me a cold stare, I asked

a friend to do the second round with his tractor.

By mid September the magic started to work. The weeds had vanished, the grass had grown from its unusually long slumber. Back from the grave it is now as green and thick as the Wembly turf, with hardly a weed in sight.

Is it any wonder that I am cheered, not only to see success snatched from the jaws of disaster, but to have the young lambs joining in the celebration? Add to that the contented cows who are sniffing the air and dreaming of days soon out at pasture; and the hard-working horses still shuffling around winter's strawed yards, but looking forward to their first mouthful of the scented grass to grow.

Grass is springing and our spirits are high. If only the car-horses and I could work out a way of harvesting that feeling and packing it in sacks, our fortunes would be made.

Cull of the wild for shooters

The deerstalking season opens on Wednesday. Ronald Faux joins a group of aspirant stalkers in Scotland

When the high-powered rifles appear on the forest range, Dave Goffin swaps his battered deerstalker hat for a red and white striped baseball cap, which stands out like a bison among the camouflage jackets and khaki fatigues. "It may look daft but I like to be very plainly visible," he says, as his class of stalkers line up to take aim at a cardboard buck 100 yards away.

Mr Goffin insists that safety is the first essential of stalking and the most important element of the course. The urge to stalk, to move as silently as shadows using cover and stealth to arrive undetected within killing distance of the quarry, is an ancient, probably prehistoric instinct.

Whatever the psychological underpinning of this instinct rests in, no sport gives it better expression than stalking wild deer. Their lack of natural predators makes calling a white "target" of a buck roe.

But the British Deer Society, which cares for the status and management of the six species of British wild deer, is concerned that the relative freedom of British stalkers could be threatened by European Commission regulations. If regulations are to be laid down, the society argues, they should be fashioned to suit British traditions. And nobody has a better understanding of these than the British Deer Society.

So, down to the 15,000 acres of Kirkhouse Forest in the Borders and the shooting range, where a group of a dozen or more aspirants are taking the society's basic stalking course. There are lairds and landowners, a builder, bus operator, marine biologist, keepers who care for deer herds in Invernesshire and Epping Forest, and a man so lost in the sport that he wears his deerstalker from breakfast time to the nightcap drama.

Deer are to a large extent responsible for their own destruction. When crops are damaged and herds grow larger than their forest area will support, then the condi-

tions of both trees and deer run into parallel decline. Kirkhouse Forest has the scars of deer grazing. In places there are coniferous trees that should be standing 10ft tall stunted to the size of shrubs by the constant nibbling of roe deer.

Dark clouds trail sheets of rain across the Moorfoot Hills as the stalkers prepare to demonstrate their shooting skills. They are dressed in a mixture of muddy camouflage and marmalade tweed, which blends with the woodland. Mr Goffin puts on his beacon hat.

When the season opens in the United States "buck fever" is apt to sweep the stalking community. Despairing farmers even label their livestock in large letters to warn off the shooters.

Mr Goffin recalls the cautionary tale of an American answering nature in the undergrowth whose bare behind was mistaken by a fellow stalker for the prominent white "target" of a buck roe.

The lethal power of a deer rifle is phenomenal. A bullet unimpeded will travel four kilometres. The self-nosed ammunition the law requires does not graze or inflict flesh wounds, if it rips off an entire limb. "Any shot has to be spot on, straight into the engine room," Mr Goffin says.

British law allows anyone with a firearms certificate to shoot over land they own or have the owner's permission to stalk, and the UK is one of the few countries where the right to shoot game does not belong to the state.

In Germany, where stalking law is one of the last remnants of legislation introduced by the Third Reich, the rules are strict and stalkers must serve probation under a registered game-keeper. Examinations cover wide areas of countryside lore. A German aspirant stalker will be asked to identify 50 species of flora and fauna.

In France the opposite applies, and the *droit de chasse* brought in with the egalitarianism of the French revolution allows an open season on any beast, anywhere. The brief



Safety first: deerstalking rifles are so powerful that from 100 yards an on-target bullet can tear off a deer's limb

duck shooting season in Italy is equally without restriction and results in a high casualty rate among shooters and quarry.

The rain pours down on the woodland clearing as the stalkers try to place four shots in the "heart" of the cardboard deer from 100 yards, which is the minimum stalking distance they must reach before attempting a kill.

Therein lies the skill. In the whole of Kirkhouse Forest there are probably no more than 300 deer. Their sense of smell and hearing, added to their ability to detect the slightest movement and then melt into the forest, are their best protection.

A stalker must read the ground, watch the wind direction, anticipate where the deer might be and move with infinite care and patience to set up his shot. A bullet takes two-tenths of a second to strike target. Mr Goffin admits: "I

don't particularly enjoy it after squeezing the trigger."

"I look at the beast lying dead and wonder what gives me the right. Sometimes I could chuck my rifle in the ditch and say 'that's it', but it has to be done. The alternative is deer starving to death."

This aspect attracts one north country landowner to the course. Deer have been around a long time, he says, and are still not fully understood. But when stalking is commercially vital to a forested estate it is important to learn more. He sees deer stalking as an intellectual exercise. "You have to read the animal's mind," he says, "because you can be sure the animal will be reading yours. I'm afraid deer take more patience than I possess."

• British Deer Society, 0734 844094. For further details on the stalking course contact the Tweed Valley Hotel, Walkerburn, Peeblesshire (0893 776324).

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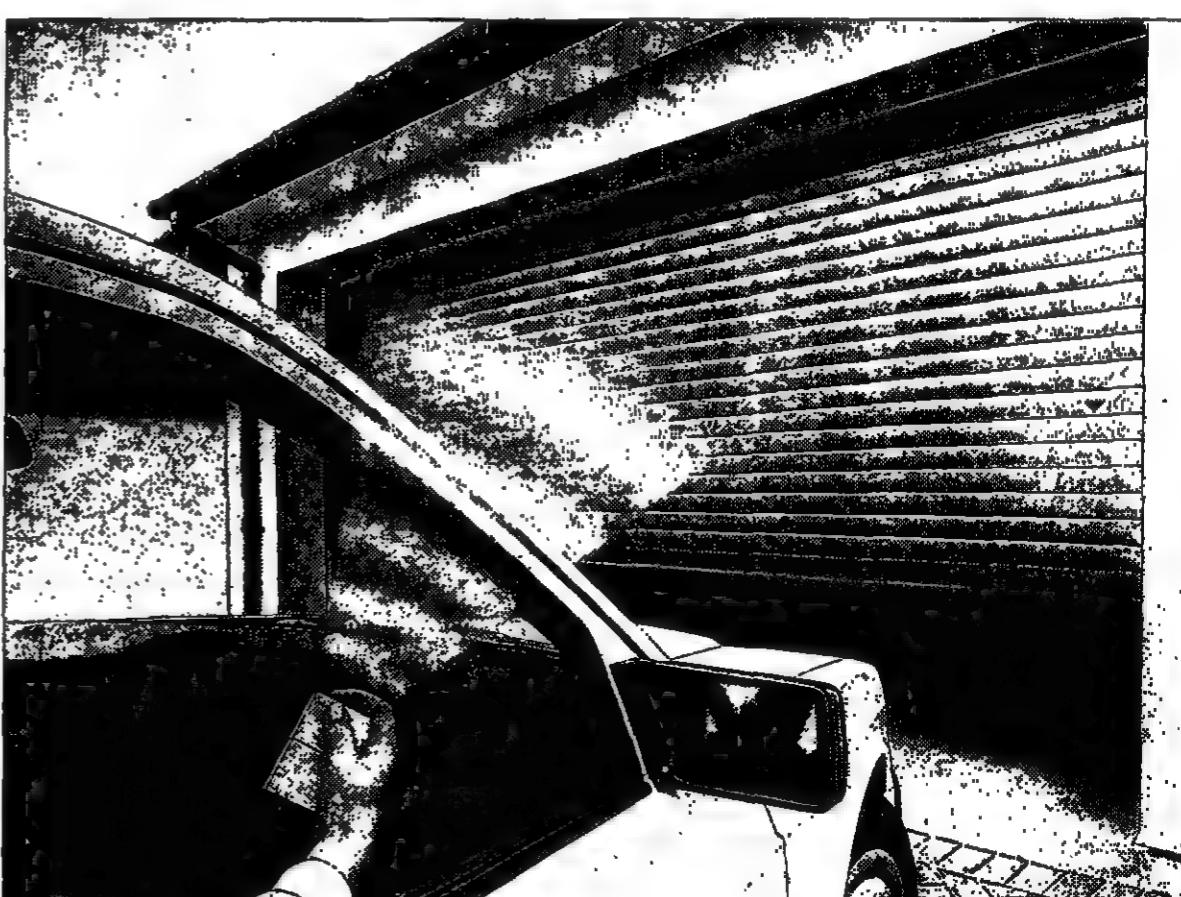
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The long-dead huia sings again

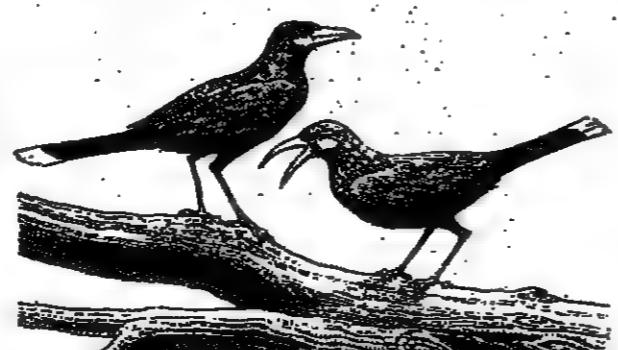
Feather report

This must be the saddest recording ever made. Haunting, plaintive, indescribably melancholy, the record gives us the long, mournful whistle of a bird that went extinct 85 years ago: five minutes of song from a bird that will never be seen again.

The song of the huia has been recreated by David Hindley using a computer and synthesiser and forms part of a collection of birdsong: a collection with two extinct, nine threatened and two vulnerable species. It is a beautiful and spooky business to play the sound of a long-extinct bird in your living room.

All the birds are worth listening to, but it is the huia that steals the show: the huia, formerly of North Island, New Zealand, that became extinct in 1907. It had always been hunted by Maoris but the white settlers managed to finish it off: habitat destruction and introduced predators and diseases did the job.

The huia was a bizarre bird. Male and females uniquely among all bird species, had differently shaped bills: the stout-billed male tore the bark from trees; the female used her long, slender bill to bore out grubs. Co-operation between the sexes was essential for survival. The huia's plumage



Record achievement: the huia bird, extinct for 85 years

was black with a metallic green gloss, and they had jolly orange patches on the face.

The huia's call was singular and lovely, and apparently lost forever — until Mr Hindley came along. "I have been living with the bird for the past six months," he says. Few people sing as long with an extinct bird.

His first hope was that some 19th-century eccentric had taken a wax-cylinder recorder into the forest to record one of the last huias, but no such luck. There were no recordings, but there were extant recordings of huia *impressions*. In 1954, a Maori called Henare Hennane was recorded whistling an impressive range of huia calls. He was 80 years old, but this is not the

sort of call you would forget.

Confirmation of the Hennane impersonation came with the discovery of two other recorded fragments of huia mimicry, one of them from a swagman called Bogi.

Mr Hindley then gleaned as much as he could from books, bearing in mind that written descriptions of birdsong are notoriously problematic.

Mr Hindley discovered that two authorities had recorded huia song in musical notation. "Musical notation cannot give the exact duration of the song, and it cannot give the quality, the colour of the sound."

The next stage was to add intuition to research and combine the two with high technology. Equipment gives Mr Hindley control of microtones



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grey in line



Water sport: anglers travel thousands of miles and pay dearly to fish on the Test

across the valley on a way probably laid by

the last century bridge races, on the high road between Danebury and Chats Hill, were as notable as Goodwood or Edward VII stayed at the House and Little Langtry, neighbouring property, connected by a private road from the Grosvenor Hotel in Houghton. The road from Houghton

is the Houghton Club, most renowned of fishing clubs. The first-floor room, protruding from the hotel frontage like a signal box overlooking the street, is the club's meeting and dining-room. The Houghton limits itself to 24 members, recruited by invitation. Arthur Rackham, Sir Edwin Landseer, J.M.W. Turner, Ike Eisenhauer and the Prince of Wales are among the famous who fished the club waters as guests.

The road from Houghton village to Horsebridge botches across the divided stream on a swift succession of little bridges, ending at a mill beside the John o' Gaunt pub (the King of Castle and Leon had his deer park here) and Horsebridge's railway station, perfectly preserved with carriage signals, station lamps and porters' barrels, all in a timewarp cocoon straddling the long-dilapidated line. At Mottisfont, the abbey's walled garden on the river bank shelters the national collection

of old roses under the protection of the National Trust. On the hills opposite, at Ampfield, the county council maintains one of the largest and most attractively presented collections of trees and shrubs in the British Isles at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum.

Thence it is a short run to the principal town on the Test, Romsey, a charmingly old-fashioned market town where television's Inspector Wexford keeps discovering fresh corpses.

The Test's final grand flourish is to water the great park of Broadlands, the Palladian home of Palmerston, Lord Mountbatten and now Lord Romsey.

From there the river slides, barely visible from the road except for a tidal reach by the railway at Redbridge, through a nature reserve of estuarine reed beds at Nursling and out to Southampton Water.

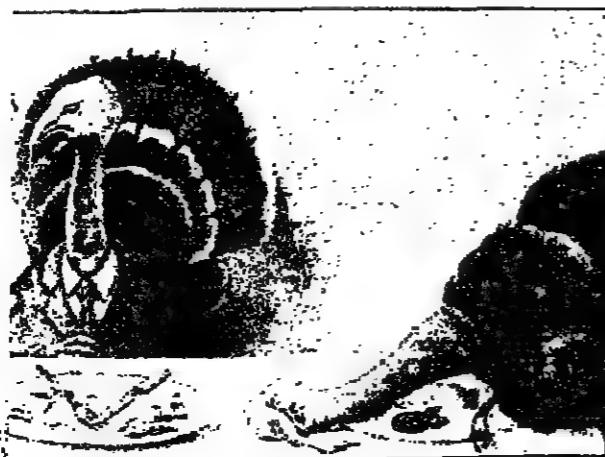
Only pedestrians, birdwatchers and salmon fishers should pursue it thus far: motorists are likely to find themselves too entangled in industrial estates and suburbs to derive any further enjoyment.

Mrs J.M. Caulcott
Julian Critchley's article "Houseman's Shropshire" (February 1) serves to acknowledge Mrs Caulcott's copyright in the Ludlow branch of the Housman Society's leaflet, *In Valleys of Springs Of Rivers*, which he used as source material.

People choose where to stay based on what is offered on the breakfast menu

versus the bacon set

TONY MCGEEENEY



"To work on an egg" has not led them to change their habits. Doctors may tell that they would do better break their fast earlier and lunch, but for many, lunch is an important passage in the day and they don't fancy that break being rated by a quick sandwich at desk.

I know it's weak of me, but if I am offered a three-course breakfast menu when staying at a hotel, only too often I end up being a three-course gluton ... and regret it.

I know there are plenty of others who are similarly fallible. The "generosity" of the hotel which provides a substantial breakfast to all its guests is

suspect. It frequently means that the people who are not used to a large meal in the morning, but who nevertheless accept the challenge, end up feeling like an over-stuffed turkey, or else they leave half the meal behind, so it becomes a case of conspicuous consumption and conspicuous waste.

Others are prudent and accept only what their stomach is used to, in which event they resent the fact that their moderation is in effect subsidising the hearty eater.

In any case, the tariff could be low if the hotel charged, as they mostly do on the Continent, for the bed or the room, and leave it to the customer to decide whether to take the breakfast or not.

And why should it be breakfast or no breakfast? Why shouldn't we have the same freedom of choice in the morning as we have with an à la carte menu the night before?

That venerable country house hotel, Gravetye Manor, outside

East Grinstead, offers a wide range of choices. If you just want tea (Indian, China, Earl Grey or herbal) with toast and home-made conserves, the charge is £2.30. Coffee (filter or decaf) with the above is £2.50.

For £6.50 you can have their Continental breakfast, which includes fresh juices, home-baked croissants, toasted bread and rolls. And to that you can add on from the menu as little or as much as you wish in the way of extras.

You might feel that at the price you are paying for the room you have a right to expect the breakfast to be thrown in.

But it's not unreasonable that you should pay for what you want rather than having to fork out a statutory sum for bed and breakfast whether you have the appetite for breakfast or not.

Let garrulants eat as heartily as they wish, but allow the rest of us the privilege to pick and choose.

HILARY RUBINSTEIN
Can breakfast make or break a weekend away? Send your tales of breakfasts wonderful or disastrous to Weekend Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

WHERE TO WALK



Bright water at the Mayfly, Testcombe Bridge, deep channels hide monster fish. The indigenous coltsfoot

Enthusiastic hikers will find that the Test Way, which yomps most of the length of the Test, is a well-beaten path. It starts at Inkpen Beacon, atop the North Downs, and finishes down at the Salmon Leap pub at Totton, on the extreme west edge of the south Hampshire conurbation.

Coming through the Bourne valley via Hursbourne Tarrant and St Mary Bourne, the path joins the Test at Middleton in Longparish, and then goes via Wherwell, Fullerton, Stockbridge, Mottisfont and Romsey to Lee and the Lower Test Nature Reserve. The total length is 48 miles.

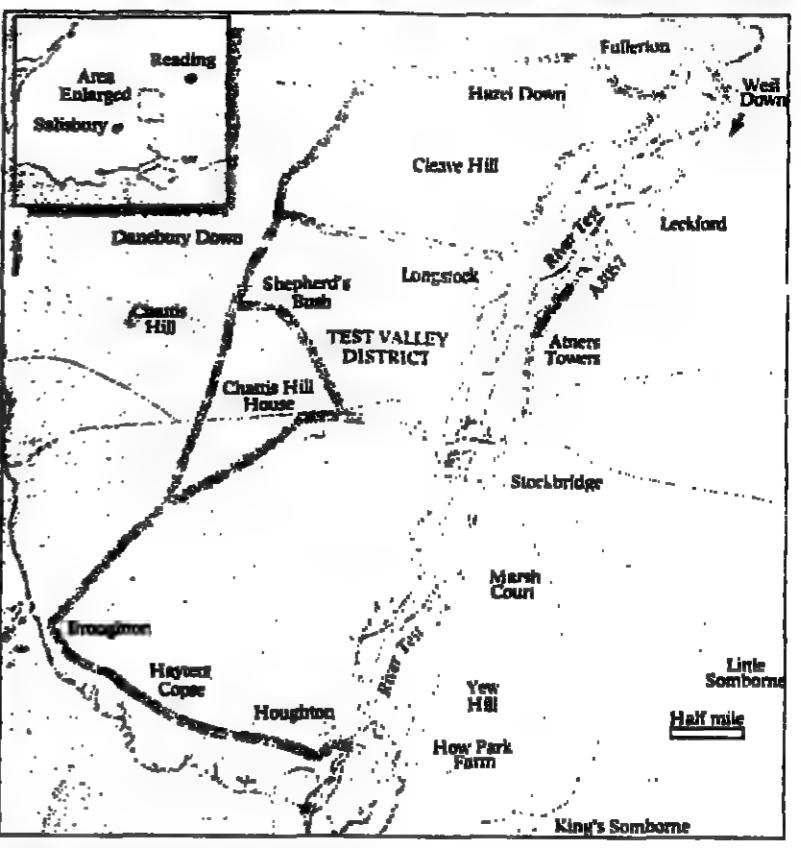
For a shorter, circular route, which also uses part of the Clarendon Way from Salisbury to Winchester, park at West Down car park, where the road from Chilbolton joins the A3057. Take the Test Way southwards from Testcombe bridge by the Mayfly pub, on the line of the dismantled Test Valley Railway (or "Sprat and Winkle Line"), which was built in 1865 on the bed of the Andover to Southampton Water canal.

White gashes in the cliffs to the left show where chalk was dug to fill the waterway. The route passes Leckford with its dumpy, patched-up little church and views across the river valley to Longstock and Hazel Down and under Armers Towers, through Stockbridge and along the National Trust's land at Common Marsh.

Marsh Court, the white house with high chimneys on a hill to the left, is a Lutyens house with Gertrude Jekyll gardens, now used as a prep school. The hedges are busy with tits and finches and reed warblers breed on the large lake to the right.

The path continues south under Yew Hill to meet the Clarendon Way coming down from How Park Farm. Turn right, crossing the Park Stream and the old boundary of John o' Gaunt's King's Somborne deer park. A footbridge crosses the Test to Houghton. Follow the Clarendon Way signs, turning left, and then up the lane to the right which leads on to the path past Hayters Copse.

When Broughton is to your left, turn



right, away from the village on a footpath that leads to the metalled road to Chats Hill and Danebury Down.

A slightly longer route by footpath

— an alternative to the Test Way — is available by forking right off the road to Houghton Down Farm. Then go down toward Stockbridge, turning acute right back up toward Chats Hill via Shepherd's Bush. Then proceed toward The Turret and the tumuli beneath Danebury Ring. At the five-way junction take the green road to the right to walk down to Longstock and turn left to go through Longstock Park, or, if your stamina is still good,

take the northward road to Waters Dow Farm and then follow the footpath around the foot of Cleave Hill and beneath Hazel Down to Fullerton, with its grange and mill.

Turn right on to the A3057 to cross the river back to West Down to cross attention to the traffic because there is no pavement. The 16-mile walk will take a full day. It can be cut into two circular halves by crossing the river at Stockbridge. The route can be followed on Pathfinder 124 (The Walks) or OS Landranger Sheet 185 (Winchester and Basingstoke). The map reference for West Down car park is SU 384390.

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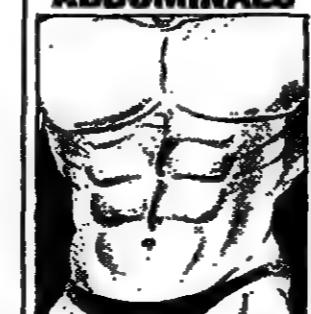
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DE
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Hérouville-Saint-Clair, 18 kms north Montpellier. 4-room villa. Traditional construction. Ground floor: entrance, living room, fitted kitchen, shower, wc. Ground floor: 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom. 135 sqm. Set in a park. Upstairs: 2 bedrooms, bathroom. 135 sqm. Set in

Villa. Six-Fours, 7 kms from Chamonix. Sea 50 kms. Villa divided into 2 separate flats: 450 sqm garden. Ground floor: 450 sqm garden, 90 sqm + garage 1st floor, 475 sqm, 120 sqm + balcony. Near all facilities. 30 m² terrace. 10 m² garden. 220 000 FF. REF 1562

South Brittany. La Baule Near Nantes. 100 sqm. 3 bedrooms. Swimming pool. Tennis court. 30 m² terrace. 10 m² garden. 220 000 FF. REF 1562

Vendée. Chassac. 7 kms from Chamonix. Sea 50 kms. Farmhouse to renovate. 250 sqm on 2 levels. Fireplace, new parquet, heating, exposed beams, double glazing, included. Ground floor: 2 bedrooms, bathroom, shower. Stone walls, equipped kitchen, bathroom, cellar, reinforced door. 15 000 sqm grounds with fruit trees. 320 000 FF. REF 1562

Yvelines. Bonniers-sur-Seine. 5 mms. from railstation. 40 mms. from Paris St-Lazare.

Haute-Savoie. Chamonix. 7 kms from Mandelieu on a picturesque road. Provencal-style house. 300 sqm from spa. Traditional house built in 1979. 137 sqm living space. 43 sqm living room, full south facing. 4 bedrooms, kitchen 100 sqm, bathroom 50 sqm. Large terrace, 145 sqm. Large terrace, 100 sqm. Large terrace, 50 sqm. Laundry, garage, 50 sqm covered terrace. Set in 1 000 sqm wooded grounds. Stone walls. Heating: electric. Swimming pool. 200 000 FF. REF 1563

Gironde. Arques. Near Bordeaux. Villa 100 sqm + base-set. 100 sqm. Entrance, living room, large equipped kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom. 100 sqm. 2-car garage. 100 000 FF. REF 1564

Tarn. Rabastens. Flair setting: 25 mms. from Toulouse, 30 mms. from Albi. Mansion house. 100 sqm living space. 40 sqm living room with fireplace. 3 bedrooms, bathroom, shower. REH: 100 000 FF. REF 1565

Poitou-Charente. Deux-Sèvres. 14 km south Parthenay. Manoir: 160 sqm. 10 rooms. 32 sqm living room, kitchen with dining area, dining room, 7 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 garage. 100 sqm. 2-car garage. 100 000 FF. REF 1566

Haute-Savoie. Annecy. Near Genève. 100 sqm + base-set. 100 sqm. Entrance, living room, large equipped kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom. 100 sqm. 2-car garage. 100 000 FF. REF 1567

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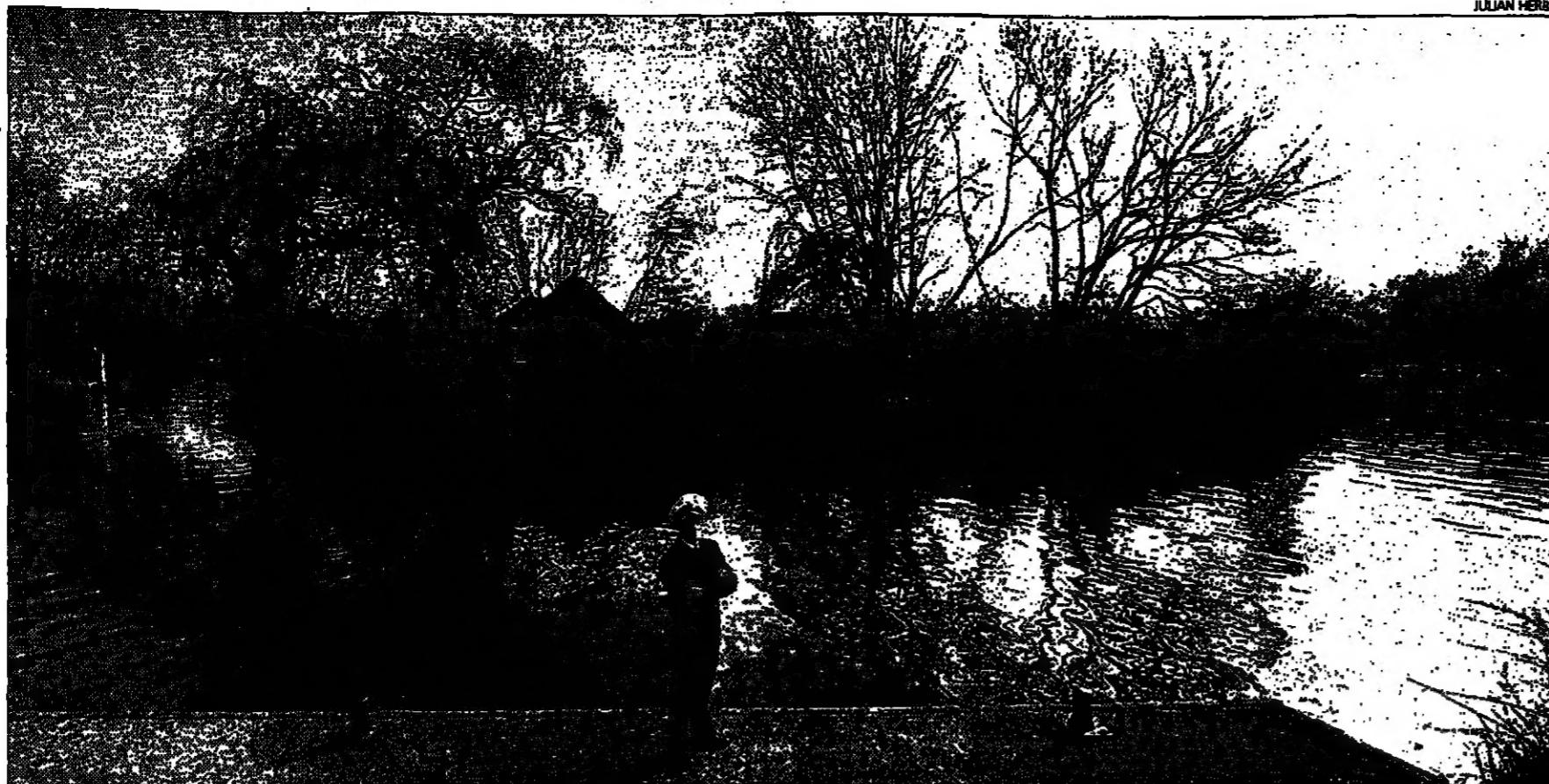
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Riverside suburbia: lock-keeper Roy Dunstan on the bank of the Thames at Windsor in front of Friday Island, once the home of Marmite inventor Dr Julius Grant

Island in the stream

On the Thames at Windsor Callum Murray explores the impractical but idyllic former home of a forensics expert

Windsor Old Lock, on the River Thames. The river is still wide here, and deep; but the noise of the water streaming over the weir does not quite drown out the whine of the Heathrow-bound jets overhead. Just below the weir, where the water is calm, a creek curves off into an artificial, landscaped cul-de-sac, its banks ornamented with the topiary and lawns of detached houses. On the other side of the river a sign reads "No Overnight Mooring". This is the suburb on water.

But now step into a rowing boat. A few strokes out into the river and everything changes. The close-cut lawns of the bank recede surprisingly quickly and you are back in the fictional world of English river life, a world in which moorhens whirr and splash noisily away, and there is absolutely nothing half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.

Five minutes' rowing diagonally across the flow from the marine cul-de-sac brings you to the rickety landing stage of Friday Island, so called, it is said, because it is shaped

like a footprint. Tying up, and stepping on to the island through the undergrowth, you find a long, thin, tree-lined stretch of land. The island's edges trail softly, messily into the water, in a tangle of roots and creepers.

Behind the thick screen of willow and philadelphus stands a small, thatched cottage with manicured lawns in front and behind. The cottage is weatherboarded and standing on brick piers. Inside it is white-painted, with a galley kitchen, a sitting/dining area and, in an extension to one side, two tiny bedrooms and a shower room. It has its own electricity and source of water, but otherwise it is primitive.

A verandah looks out over the sunnier lawn.

Friday Island's previous owner was the eminent forensics expert Dr Julius Grant — "The Man All Forgers Fear" as the *Reader's Digest* dubbed him in an article — who died last year, aged 89.

Mr Dunstan was completely won

over by Dr Grant, although he was already an old man by the time he got to know him. "There aren't many people of 87 who will climb on to a thatched roof," he says.

The island was Dr Grant's retreat from city life. He was sailing that had originally brought Dr Grant to the island and he frequently went out on the river. But the rest of his time he spent caring for the cottage and the island, Mr Dunstan says, repairing the boarding, tending the garden and so on.

Clearly a wooden house surrounded by thick vegetation on an island is bound to require a lot of maintenance. The question is, who would be prepared to pay £180,000 now to spend their weekends crawling about a thatched roof?

Of course, owning an island has a romantic ring to it. But the reality is that the place is likely to appear too uncharmed for the tidy-minded river suburbite, and too small for

the pop star or urban sophisticate looking for somewhere to invite his friends at the weekend.

Indeed, the whole place has a scaled-down appearance. Dr Grant was a small man, and some of the ceilings and doorways in the cottage are very low.

Inside, mementoes of Dr Grant's tenure remain: old copies of *The Criminologist*, one with an article by Dr Grant; the *River Thames User's Guide*; cane furniture; bottles of sauce, a soda siphon. The idea of leaving these around may have been to avoid giving an air of abandonment to the cottage, but the effect is perhaps too evocative of the former owner. The cottage and island are like a time capsule, protected from the 1990s by the river.

What kind of person would Mr Dunstan like to see succeeding Dr Grant as owner of Friday Island? "I don't expect there are many in the world like him," he says without hesitation. "But if there are, I'd like it to be someone like him."

• Friday Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire. Agents: Hamptons Giddy & Giddy (0753 855555).



Bolt hole: Charles II took refuge here at the start of the civil war

Royal roots in splendour

Despite being named after one style of architecture, Queen Anne House is, in fact, Jacobean, and its royal connections were established in the reign of Charles II, when it was the home of his chief minister, Sir Edward Hyde.

Following his father's defeat at Worcester, the young Charles II went into hiding in the imposing red-brick Oxfordshire mansion. After the war Hyde triumphantly escorted the King back to England in 1660 to reclaim his throne, and was rewarded for his loyal service with the title 1st Earl of Clarendon.

The house's royal connections extend still further. Hyde's daughter, Anne, married the Duke of York, who became James II.

The Grade II listed house was originally built for Hyde's father in the early part of the reign of James I. Although it passed out of the family at the end of the 17th century, the Hyde connection was restored in 1908 when the MP for Westbury, Sir Clarendon Hyde, made his home there. In the 1940s the house was briefly a hospital; it was later returned to use as a family home and split into three of which Queen Anne House is the main block of the original mansion.

The house, with its original Jacobean sundial over the front door, is approached by a sweeping drive flanked by stone pillars. The two wings, one Jacobean, the other Edwardian, have discreetly concealed entrances.

The garden at the front of the house has rose beds enclosed by wisteria-covered brick walls. Steps lead from the formal garden to two

HOUSE HUNTER

Queen Anne House
Oxfordshire

acres of grass and mature chestnuts.

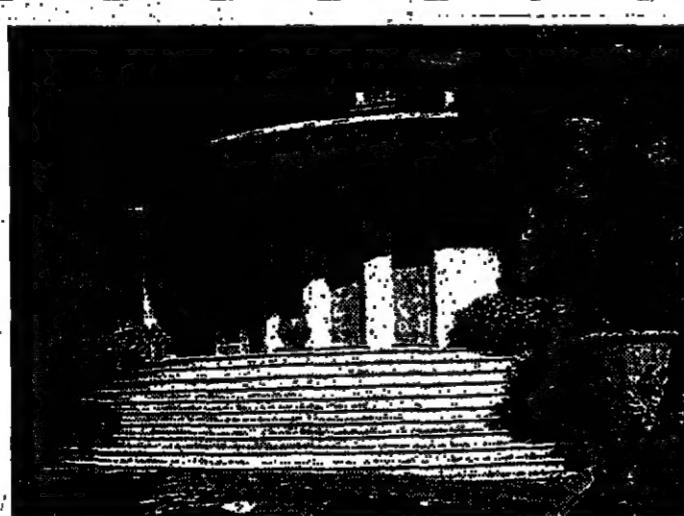
Within the grounds is a lawn enclosed by 15ft-high yew trees. The enclosure is slightly too small for a tennis court, but it would be perfect for a croquet lawn. The grounds have good views of the sweeping Oxfordshire countryside.

The most interesting feature of the interior is the Jacobean panelling: the dining and drawing-room also have extensive cornicing. The dining-room has a large, open stone fireplace and there is stone flagging in the hall. There is a large kitchen, utility room, a master bedroom with dressing-room and en suite bathroom, six further bedrooms (one self-contained with a tiny sitting-room and en suite bathroom), three separate bathrooms, a cellar, double garage and lots of cupboards.

The asking price is, in typical agency speak, "realistic" at £365,000. In the two weeks since the house went on the market, interest has been considerable, says Jacqueline Salkeld from John D. Wood's Oxfordshire office (0865 311522).

RACHEL KELLY

Italian flower power



Round house: apartment for sale in the 18th-century Villa Venere



ITALIAN RIVIERA

The British made the Italian Riviera fashionable 100 years ago, and it has kept its snob appeal. The beautiful crescent of coast linking France to Tuscany, stretching from Ventimiglia to Portovenere, remains the magnet for those in search of sun, sea and sophistication, and property prices are high.

This stylish garden apartment (right) within the restored 18th-century Villa Venere, for sale at £298,000, is situated 200 metres from the sea at Bordighera, a resort blessed with a good beach and regal promenades, a few miles east of the French border and Monte Carlo and an hour from Nice airport.

Set on two floors, with its own entrance, terrace and gate, the apartment has a large living-room, designer kitchen and three bedrooms with en suite bathrooms. Most of the rooms are circular, and the property is set in its own garden, with cypress trees and subtropical shrubs.

Buyers should allow at least 10 per cent on top of the purchase price to cover agents' fees, notarial charges, taxes and other liabilities.

The UK agent is Casa Travella, 65 Birchwood Road, Wilmington, Kent DA2 7HF (0322 660988).

Easy reached by plane Nice, the region is well placed for Britain and the rest of Europe. Sheltered by the lush Maritime Alps, this part of Italy, especially the coast west of Imperia, enjoys one of the mildest winter climates in the country. Known as the "riviera of flowers", roses and carnations thrive here even in February, and oranges, lemons, palms, olives and vines grow in profusion.

The selection of property available is considerable. There are elegant seaside apartments, narrow, mellow stone harbour-front houses, tall pastel town houses and aristocratic villas in magical settings, under swaying palms with bright gardens.

Property prices vary, largely depending upon location. Villas and apartments in the fashionable resorts, like San Remo, Alassio, Rapallo and Portofino, are more expensive than in many parts of Rome and Milan. A two-bedroom flat in Portofino, a romantic little port that has become a favourite haunt of the rich and famous who own homes there, costs about £500,000; or there are elegant hillside villas from £2 million.

Seaside towns like Bordighera and Ventimiglia, close to the French border, have been English enclaves for more than a century.

In Ventimiglia, midway between Monte Carlo and San Remo, a small modernised villa on half an acre, surrounded by vast fields of carnations, is currently for sale at £210,000 (agents: Casa Travella).

For the same sort of money, you can buy a two-bedroom flat in a period villa set back from the sea in Bordighera.

Prices slip further east around Imperia, the olive oil capital of

Italy, with its bustling port and charming old town. Modern sea-front flats along this stretch of the Riviera, from Imperia to Savona can still be found from £60,000 for two bedrooms or from £140,000 for a small detached villa.

Some of the most interesting properties are to be found in the hills above Imperia, around the medieval village of Dolcedo, the centre of the best olive groves in the region. Old houses in this area represent some of the best value available, although prices can hardly be described as cheap. A dilapidated village house with two bedrooms, balconies and roof terrace, starts at £60,000; or there are small hillside villas, shabby but habitable, with a terrace and garden, from £70,000.

Mr Turner has known and loved the house for years. Unchanging and unmodernising in terms of maintenance, it is full of ephemera collected over the decades: a roomful of masks for his next garden project (a Melanesian maze), his collection of walking sticks from around the world, and shelves full of books on Mycenae and on Stonehenge.

He flies the European flag over

the house to show when he is in residence, enjoying the relative

calm most weekends after a week in Strasbourg, Brussels, or both. His London base is a small mews house near Hyde Park Corner, which also serves as his office.

Westleton was converted in 1926

from a Jacobean barn. The house is

Secrets of the Euro-garden

Home from home:

Amédée Turner

When Amédée Turner was 17 years old, his widowed mother moved the family to Westleton in Suffolk. In those days — 1946 — the family put all decisions to a democratic vote. If Amédée wanted to plant a tree, or paint one down, there would be several meetings before he persuaded his mother and his younger sister, Anita, to agree.

Today the garden of The Barn at Westleton has become a magnificent obsession for Mr Turner, QC, the MEP for Suffolk and South East Cambridge.

Much of his 12-acre garden is filled with "rooms": visitors are given a map to guide them around his creative obsession. His current passion is a Pylos garden that echoes the Palace of Mycenae, with each room separated by tall, feathery pampas grass.

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Rooms with a view of Brussels: Amédée and Debby Turner in a section of the garden at Westleton

workshop or school during the second world war, and on the back of the door you can see a series of electrical calculations written in chalk that must have been used to teach the soldiers who were billeted here. When we moved in just after the war it was ruined inside.

Soldiers do that: burn the paneling, kick holes in the plaster."

Mr Turner and Debby, his American-born wife, have two grown-up children, Pippa and Andrew. It was for Pippa that he designed what she calls her "Synoptic Garden" for contemplation, although its African masks do little to calm her. Pippa studied at Yale Divinity School and is a candidate for the priesthood in New York. Andrew has worked in Brussels, and usually helps in his father's election campaigns.

Mr Turner, who has been an MEP since 1979, paints every summer in France, where he and Debby own a house near Avignon. Each year he shows his work locally; this year it comprised a series of oils featuring the sun and Stonehenge.

Westleton remains the core of his scattered life. "One day I'd like to live in a pavilion in the garden," he says. He could build it near the newly planted maze or in the many-roomed Mycenaean palace. He will be spoilt for choice among all the garden rooms he has created.

JOY BILLINGTON

Once stately progress halted by bureaucrats

Heap of the week: The Hendre, Monmouth

THE Hendre is a large, intriguing and decidedly quirky Victorian country house, lent lustre by its association with C.S. Rolls, co-founder of Rolls-Royce.

But today it is empty and deteriorating — yet another example of the dangers of giving planning permission to build in the grounds of country houses.

The Hendre lies in an attractive, hilly country about four miles northwest of Monmouth in a large and magnificent deer park, sprinkled with delightfully eccentric estate buildings. The landscaping is in large part the work of Henry Milner, among the best of the late-Victorian garden designers.

Three leading architects were involved in successfully transforming the old hunting lodge on the site first, from 1830, George Vaughan Maddox, designer of a

series of public buildings in Monmouth; then, from 1837, Thomas Henry Wyatt, best known for his church at Wilton, outside Salisbury; and finally Sir Aston Webb, architect to the main house from Buckingham Palace.

Then tragedy struck. C.S. Rolls's death in a flying accident in 1910 was followed by that of his father two years later, and his two brothers in the First World War.

In 1966 the estate came to John Harding Rolls, who conceived a plan for turning The Hendre into a timesharing complex and, as the first phase was completed, an 18-hole golf course. However, financial difficulties pushed the property into receivership.

Sanyo Oil (now Sanyo), a Japanese leisure company that bought the surviving 1,100 acres

MARCUS BINNEY



The Hendre: the former home of the co-founder of Rolls-Royce

Brand new clock faces

Next month young clock makers get a London showcase. **Nicole Swengley** reports

Nothing is as symbolic of spring as tonight's ritual of putting the clocks forward. Now a number of young British craftsmen are giving the art of time-keeping a fresh new look. All their time-pieces are available to order directly from their studios, and many will be on show at the Creative Eye exhibition in London next month.

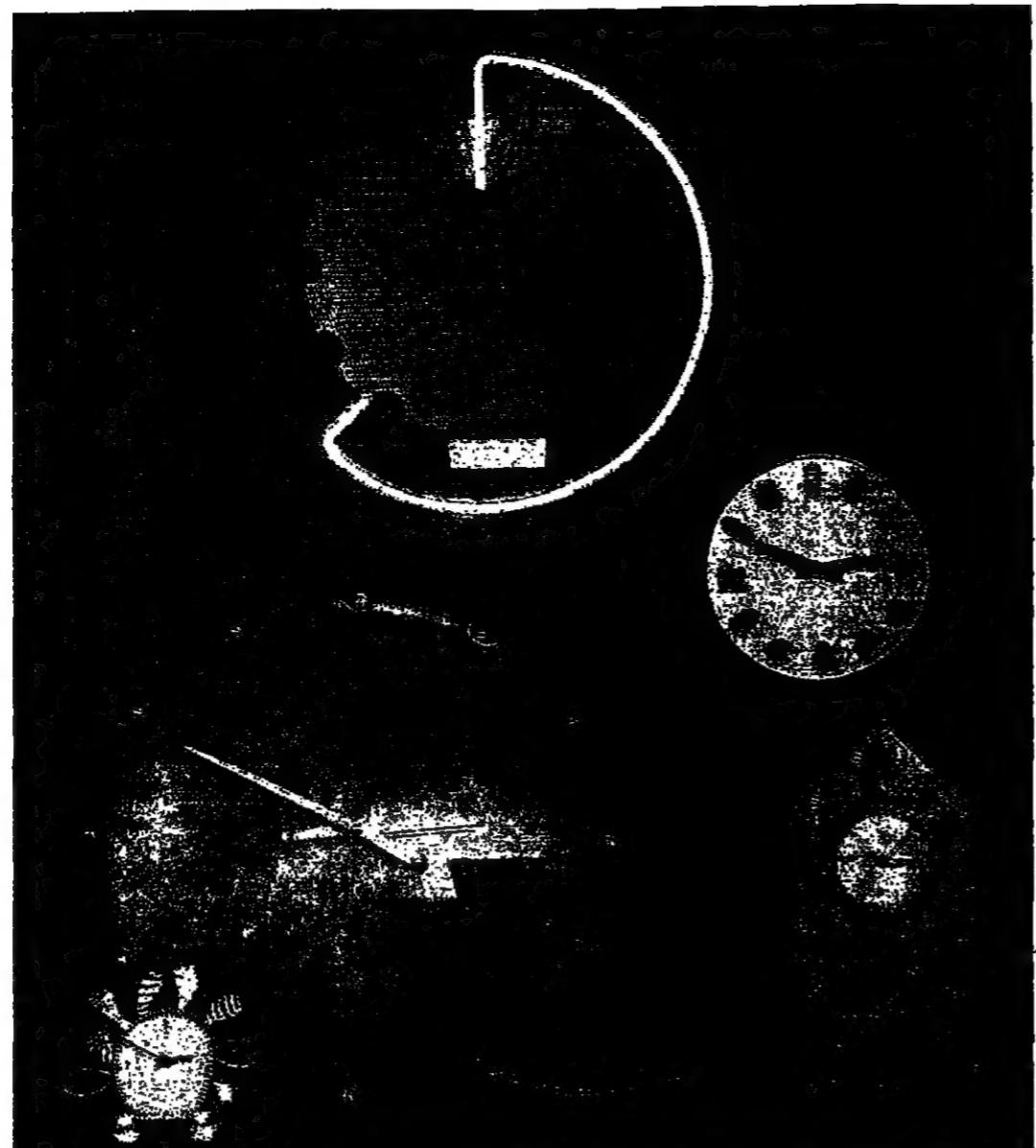
Tanya Schwartz, who trained as a silversmith, has introduced an element of humour by painting or gold-leaving exotic fish or mythical flowers on the pewter dials of her clocks. She gives all her clocks, from 5in desk clocks to 5ft grandfather clocks, a dramatic, gothic look. Prices range from £150 to £5,000 — the freestanding pewter, gesso and 22ct red gold leaf clock pictured costs £640.

Marianne Forrest also trained as a silversmith, then diversified into work with concrete and glass. Among her more unusual, larger pieces is a patinated brass shield-shaped clock with aluminium hands and gold plated spheres (the largest pictured, £1,500).

Jewellery designers Kim Ellwood and Michael Abbott ventured into clockmaking as a spontaneous experiment to increase the scale of their work. "Jewellery can be very pernickety. We both wanted to try our hands at larger pieces which still required very detailed work," Miss Ellwood says.

The bright colours of Miss Ellwood's jewellery are echoed in the vibrant screen-printing of petal-shaped stainless steel carriage, mantle, and desk clocks from £40 to £80. Pictured in the foreground is her "cactus trolley clock", £59. Mr Abbott incorporates imagery reminiscent of scientific instruments and nautical paraphernalia in his custom-built hollow, cylindrical etched steel clocks. Prices range from £180 to £2,000.

Anne Finlay is another jewellery designer who is taking up the clockmaking challenge. The dials and hands of her clocks come in bright primaries, while the cases are PVC or laminate. So far she has developed two styles of table clock with angular planes and dials reminiscent of an archery target



Just the tickers: examples of the contemporary time pieces being produced by British designers

(pictured in blue and black). The clocks, on sale at the Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

Louise Slater, who specialises in laminate jewellery, has come up with a laminate clock face whose numerals are natural pebbles. "I like introducing a contrast between man-made and natural materials," she says. The clock faces are black or white (pictured top right), and cost £180 for wall clocks or £145 for desktop versions. The wall clocks are on sale in London at Contemporary Applied Arts (071-836 6993), while the desk clocks can be bought at the Crafts Council shop at the Victoria & Albert.

Clock making is also attracting the attention of a number of bespoke furniture makers. Nic Pyke, a woodworker who trained under John Makepeace at Parnham School of Wood for Craftsmen, has created a burr oak clock with stainless steel dial and pink neon tube describing the arc of the clock hands. A sheet of hand-etched glass behind the clock picks up a glow from the neon (pictured in the background). This was a one-off piece made for a client; similar clocks cost around £680 to order.

• Creative Eye runs from April 30 to May 4 at Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road, London SW3

DEAN Mum, Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

EVANS & BROWN. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

FINLAY. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

FRITH. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

GENTLEMAN. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

HILLWOOD & ABBOTT. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

KIM ELLWOOD. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

LOUISE SLATER. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

MAURICE FORREST. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

NIC PYKE. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

PAULINE. Happy Mother's Day, £100.00. The Crafts Council shop at London's Victoria & Albert Museum, cost £30 and £44.

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BBC 1

6.35 Open University: The All Electric Home 7.00 Pure Maths: Matrix Algebra (3901003)
7.25 News and weather (5248041)
7.30 Crystal Tipps and Aladdin Animation (r) (1210770) 7.45 Wiz Bang: A laugher and fun interlude (s) (784515) 7.45 Bravestarr: Animated adventures of the bravest sheriff in space (r) (9245983)
8.05 Eggs 'n' Baker: Cheryl Baker's music and cookery series (s) (970958) 8.35 Thundercats: Cartoon adventures (r) (4944206)
9.00 Going Live! Young people's entertainment, introduced by Phillip Schofield and Sarah Greene. The guests include astronomer Patrick Moore, singer Yazz and Press Gang actor Dexter Fletcher (871757) 12.12 Weather (333206)
12.15 Grandstand introduced by Steve Rider. The line-up is (subject to alteration): 12.20 Skating: the world championship from Oakland, California; 1.05 News & 1.15 Football: a review of the midweek internationals; 1.25, 2.00 and 2.35 Racing from Ascot; 1.40 and 2.15 Ice Hockey: the Hawks play-offs from Cardiff; 2.30 and 3.55 Rugby League: live coverage of the second semi-final of the Silk Cut Challenge cup from Burnden Park, Bolton, between Bradford Northern and Wigan; 3.45 Football: half-times; 4.35 Final Score (1674548)
5.05 News and weather (3298461)
5.15 Regional News and sport (6278848) Wales: (to 5.45) Wales on Saturday
5.20 Stay Tuned! Tony Robinson introduces a selection of Tom and Jerry cartoons (2221645)
5.45 Big Break: Snooker and quiz game show hosted by Jim Davidson. The guests are Terry Griffiths, Ray Reardon and Joe Johnson. (Ceefax) (s) (786593)
6.15 Noel's House Party. The last in the fun and game series presented by Noel Edmonds (s) (330793)



At the controls of an alien spacecraft: Joey Kramer (7.05pm)

7.05 Film: Flight of the Navigator (1986) starring Joey Kramer. Diving science fiction adventure from the 80s studio about a 12-year-old boy who is knocked out in a fall, regains consciousness and finds a voice in his head calling for help. Directed by Randal Kleiser. (Ceefax) (5313664)
8.35 On the Up: Disappearing crime starring Dennis Waterman as a self-made millionaire with a snobby wife and a caring mother. With Judy Buxton and Joani Sims (r). (Ceefax) (s) (220867)
9.05 News and Campaigns Report with Marilyn Lewis. (Ceefax) Sport and weather (s) (969577)
9.35 Moon and Sun. The last in the patchy astrological thriller series starring Michael Martin, John Michie and, this week, Don Henderson. (Ceefax) (s) (245054)
10.30 That's Life! Light-hearted consumer affairs series presented by Esther Rantzen. (Ceefax) (s) (420003)
11.10 Midnight Caller: With Malice Toward One. Jack Kilian becomes the target for an embittered killer whom Jack was responsible for putting behind bars. Starring Gary Cole. Last in the series. (Ceefax) (s) (969577)
12.00 Film: The Uncanny (1977) starring Peter Cushing and Ray Milland. An author, convinced that the cat world is planning to take over the earth, narrates three tales of feline horror. They fail to grip. Directed by Denis Heroux (7644788)
1.25 Weather (5383823)

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SATELLITE

SKY ONE
© Via the Astra and Marcopolo satellites, 6.00am Europe Day (643121) 6.30 Elephant Boy (61020) 7.00 Fun Factory (369333) 11.00 Transformers (50886) 11.30 Star Trek (6115) 12.00 Beyond 2000 (74312) 1.00pm Football: the World Cup (224515) 1.30 Saturday Night Wrestling (10789) 3.00 Movie: 3.00 Iron Home (61130) 5.00 Lottery (4312) 6.00 Return to Treasure Island (70586) 7.00 T.J. Hooker (91024) 8.00 Unscripted: Last Man Standing (224515) 8.30 Saturday Night Wrestling (10789) 11.00 Koz (26777) 12.00 Bonds (7107) 1.00pm Pages from Skysat

SKY MOVIES:-

© Via the Astra and Marcopolo satellites, 8.00am Saturday (224515) 8.30 Saturday Night (61020) 9.00 Saturday Night (61020) 10.00 Saturday Night (61020) 11.00 Saturday Night (61020) 12.00 Saturday Night (61020) 1.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 2.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 3.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 4.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 5.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 6.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 7.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 8.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 9.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 10.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 11.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 12.00pm Saturday Night (61020)

THE MOVIE CHANNEL

© Via the Astra and Marcopolo satellites, 8.00am Saturday (224515) 8.30 Saturday Night (61020) 9.00 Saturday Night (61020) 10.00 Saturday Night (61020) 11.00 Saturday Night (61020) 12.00 Saturday Night (61020) 1.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 2.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 3.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 4.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 5.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 6.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 7.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 8.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 9.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 10.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 11.00pm Saturday Night (61020) 12.00pm Saturday Night (61020)

SCREENSPORT

© Via the Astra satellites, 7.00am Ford Star (642048) 8.00am German Touring (223202) 8.30pm Spain (61020) 9.00pm France (61020) 10.00pm Italy (61020) 11.00pm Germany (61020) 12.00pm America (61020) 1.00pm France (61020) 2.00pm Italy (61020) 3.00pm Germany (61020) 4.00pm France (61020) 5.00pm Italy (61020) 6.00pm France (61020) 7.00pm Germany (61020) 8.00pm France (61020) 9.00pm Germany (61020) 10.00pm France (61020) 11.00pm Germany (61020) 12.00pm France (61020)

EUROSPORT

© Via the Astra satellite, 8.00am International Motorsport (12491) 8.00am Formula 1 Show Jumping World Cup (223202) 8.30pm France (61020) 9.00pm Germany (61020) 10.00pm Italy (61020) 11.00pm Spain (61020) 12.00pm America (61020) 1.00pm France (61020) 2.00pm Italy (61020) 3.00pm Germany (61020) 4.00pm France (61020) 5.00pm Italy (61020) 6.00pm France (61020) 7.00pm Germany (61020) 8.00pm France (61020) 9.00pm Germany (61020) 10.00pm France (61020) 11.00pm Spain (61020) 12.00pm America (61020)

LIFESTYLE

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THE COMEDY CHANNEL

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SCREENSPORT

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